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For the new Genealogy Institute, see p. 29

Early History of the Rabbinical Weil Family

(Clarifying Some Historical Errors)

By Werner L. Frank, Calabasas, CA wlfrank@pacbell.net

The most startling and exciting result of my genealogical investigations was the discovery of a family link to the well-known and highly respected rabbinical family Weil. For the past 600 years, this Weil dynasty has been the source of a countless line of rabbis and Jewish community leaders, having spread their influence and purview throughout southern Germany, as well as to more distant pockets such as Prague in the Czech Republic, Lissa, Cracow, Brisk, and Lublin in Poland, and Ludmir in Ukraine. There may also be a connection between this family and the many Weil/Weill/Weyl folks that settled in Alsace and elsewhere.

I was introduced to the Weil family by cousin David Blum[1], who had determined our descent from Rosa Weil (1748-1821) of Kippenheim, married in 1766 to Maier Auerbach (1746-1834) of Nordstetten. From this point, in the eighteenth century, I was immediately catapulted back 400 more years to the recorded origin of the Weil lineage in the fourteenth century. Going back that far boggles the mind, realizing that I had traced at least one of my family branches to the time before the discovery of the Americas.

But, even more surprises were awaiting discovery. The Weil family claimed descent from that major thirteenth century *Gaon* (illustrious), Rabbi Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg (1215-1298), called the *Mahara"m*[2]. This relationship would extend my family purview several hundred years earlier, bringing my analysis to the epoch of the Second Crusades and the time of Moses Maimonides (1135-1204).

Origin of the Weil Family. The patriarch of the Weil family is Rabbi Jakob ben Yehuda Weil, the *Mahari"v*[3], born in the period 1380-1390 in Weil der Stadt, a small town near Stuttgart in Württemberg. Jakob Weil was a student of the renowned and honored Rabbi Jakob Halevi Möllin (the *Mahari"l*) of Mainz and Worms. Jakob Weil was ordained by the *Mahari"l* and installed at Nürnberg as rabbi in 1407, where he married a woman, name unknown. Berthold Rosenthal acknowledged that the *Mahari"l*'s brightest student was Jakob Weil, whose descendants counted among the oldest Jewish families that had settled in southern Germany [17, p.43]. See bibliography below, p.12.

Jakob Weil served as rabbi in Nürnberg, Augsburg, Bamberg and Erfurt, the latter location from 1444 until his death around 1456 (see *Encyclopedia Judaica*). He made his historical mark by assembling and codifying the laws of ritual slaughtering and examination, resulting in a scholarly treatise, *Shechitot v'Bedikot*. Rabbi Weil was also responsible for compiling the prayers and practices of the Jews living along the Rhine. He was a prolific participant in *responsa*, the questions & answers (*She-elot u Teshuvot*) that were exchanged between scholars on *halachic* (talmudic legal) matters. In this regard Rabbi Jakob Weil was one of the key contributors among the early *achronim*, the second group of rabbinical authorities engaged in the pursuit of rationalizing the issues of Jewish law[4]. The writings of Rabbi Jakob Weil have been repeatedly published, beginning in Venice in 1549[5]. An example of a contemporary antho-

[1] David Blum of Jackson Heights, New York.

[2] Rabbi Meir ben Baruch of Rothenburg was a *Tosaphist* (codifier and commentator on the Talmud), as well as a liturgical poet. He is more popularly called the *Mahara"m*, a title of honor derived from the lead letters MHRM of the Hebrew, *Morenu Harav Rabi Meir* (Our teacher, the rabbi, Rabbi Meir). He has also been bestowed the title of *Me'or haGolah* (Light of the Exile), along with Rash"i and Rabbenu Gershom. R. Meir was born in Worms around 1215, ultimately ending his life in prison at Ensisheim, Alsace beginning in 1286, remaining there until his death in 1293. Fourteen years later his body was ransomed and reburied in Worms.

[3] *Morenu Harav Rabi Weil* (Our teacher, the rabbi, Rabbi Weil).

[4] The *achronim* (the later ones) are distinguished from the earlier scholars who were called the *rishonim* (the first ones). The *Encyclopedia Judaica* quotes prominent Rabbi Salomon Luria, stating that "Weil was the chief of the *achronim* and his successors relied upon his rulings." (On the other hand, Raphael Halperin [10] categorizes Rabbi Jakob Weil among the last of the *rishonim*.)

[5] I actually thumbed through an original copy of this publication at the Dorot Jewish Division of the New York Public Library, According to the identification stamp contained on the inside front cover of this rare book, the most recent owner was Rabbi Dr. Adolph D. Jellinek, *Prediger* (preacher) of Vienna.

logy containing a number of his works is the comprehensive volume, published in 1959, *Sheelot u Teshuvot, v'Halachot Shechitah v'Bedikah, v'Chidushe Dinim* [26].

The thoughts and views of Rabbi Jakob Weil have been captured in the Ph.D.dissertation of Rabbi Bernard Rosensweig at Yeshiva University, leading to the publication of his scholarly book, *Ashkenazic Jewry in Transition* [16]. In this work the author describes the life style, the views, and the practices of fifteenth century *Ashkenazic* Jewry[6] as reflected in almost 200 *responsa* of Rabbi Weil[7]. Furthermore, he has also deduced from these *responsa* particulars relating to the life events of Rabbi Weil himself. It appears from this analysis that others, and older sources on the life of Rabbi Jakob Weil, had also relied on these *responsa* for their various conclusions regarding aspects of his family and his career.

One of his prominent descendants, the historian and novelist Selma Stern-Täubler took a completely different look at the life of Rabbi Jakob Weil. A prolific author, Stern wrote a fictional account of the fourteenth century life of the family of Eleasar from Weil der Stadt [21 (English), 22 (German)], reflecting her view of the life and times that must have surrounded her ancestors during the time of the Black Plague and beyond.

**

The origin of the Weil family is not clear. A 1957 assessment of the early Weil history is contained in Ernest B. Weill's *Weil-de Veil, A Genealogy, 1360-1956* [25].[8] He refers to a 1936 document advancing the notion that Jakob's father, Yehuda (born ca.1360), may have come from Spain to Germany [4]. There is even an attempt to tie the Weil name to a *sefardic* location, Valls near Tarragona. Despite these suggestions, I believe that the family took its surname from Rabbi Jakob's birthplace, Weil der Stadt.

Ernest Weill also reveals another belief that is a matter of controversy. He identifies the unnamed wife of Rabbi Jakob Weil as a descendant of the great scholar, Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg (the *Mahara"m*) of the thirteenth century. This position is supported by descendant Asher Weill in [14, p.176] as well as by Raymond M. Jung in his letter to *Maajan*.[9]

In contrast, a family connection to R. Meir is also mentioned in the 1898 work of Dr. Leopold Löwenstein [13]. In reference to Rabbi Jakob Weil, he states: "*zu seinen Ahnen gehörte der berühmte R. Meir von Rothenburg* ." This implies that Rabbi Jacob Weil was in the direct line of descent from R. Meir, which contradicts the just mentioned role played by his wife. To further the argument, Löwenstein then points out that the tombstone of Rabbi Nathanel Weil, a seventeenth century descendant, contains the inscription, "Descendant of the *Mahari"v*, the *Mahara"m* and the great *Tosaphists*." Clearly, Nathanel Weil is entitled to this identification with Rabbi Meir since the inscription is true whether the line of ascent goes through Rabbi Jakob's side or through the side of his wife.[10]

Other prominent sources such as Güdemann [9], Rosensweig [16], and Shapiro [18][11] repeat the

[6] Here we use the term *Ashkenaz* to refer to the area of Jewish settlement in western Europe, north of the Mediterranean, specifically on the banks of the Rhine river. While the term now refers to Jews from all of Europe, in contradistinction to the *Sefardim*, in the Middle Ages the word distinguished the German Jews (including the area of Alsace) from those Jews living in Poland and other points of Eastern Europe.

[7] This approach for studying a man and his period through the analysis of *responsa* was exemplified by Rabbi Rosensweig's teacher, Dr. Irving A. Agus, author of *Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg* [1]. Agus enumerates 788 *responsa* in question and answer format, preceded by a thorough life story of Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg and his times.

[8] There are actually three main sources upon which Ernest Weill builds his genealogy. One is the classical work of Dr. Leopold Löwenstein [13]. A second is a study by Berthold Rosenthal, commissioned by Alfred Sonder and published in 1935, *Ahnentafel der Kinder des Nathan Weill* [20]. The third source is the Dutch language genealogy, *Het Geslacht de Weille, (Weil, Weill, De Veille, De Veil)* [4]. In April, 2000 I became aware of further research by Gerhard Sonder, son of Alfred Sonder.He undertook translating his father's 1935 book into English. In this process he updated the genealogical data, made some corrections to the original work, and added some of his own comments and observations to enhance the text for his own descendants. My research has been enhanced through private communications with Gerhard Sonder.

[9] *Leserbriefe*, page 929 of *Heft* 40. It should be pointed out that none of these three cited sources produced any evidence to support their positions.

[10] According to Löwenstein [13, p.5], Rabbi Nathanel can also claim descent from the *Tosaphists* through his mother, Miriam.

[11] Jacob Shapiro in *Mishpachot Atikot b'Yisrael* [18] goes even further. On pages 70, 86, and 159 he identifies Yehuda, father of Rabbi Jakob Weil as *neched* (grandson) of the *Mahara"m* of Rothenburg, albeit there are three to four generations separating these two individuals. The only likely explanation for this illogical situation is to adopt the less frequent usage of the word *neched* to mean progeny, descendant or offspring.

Direct Descendants of R. Meir ben Baruch (MAHARA"M) of Rothenburg

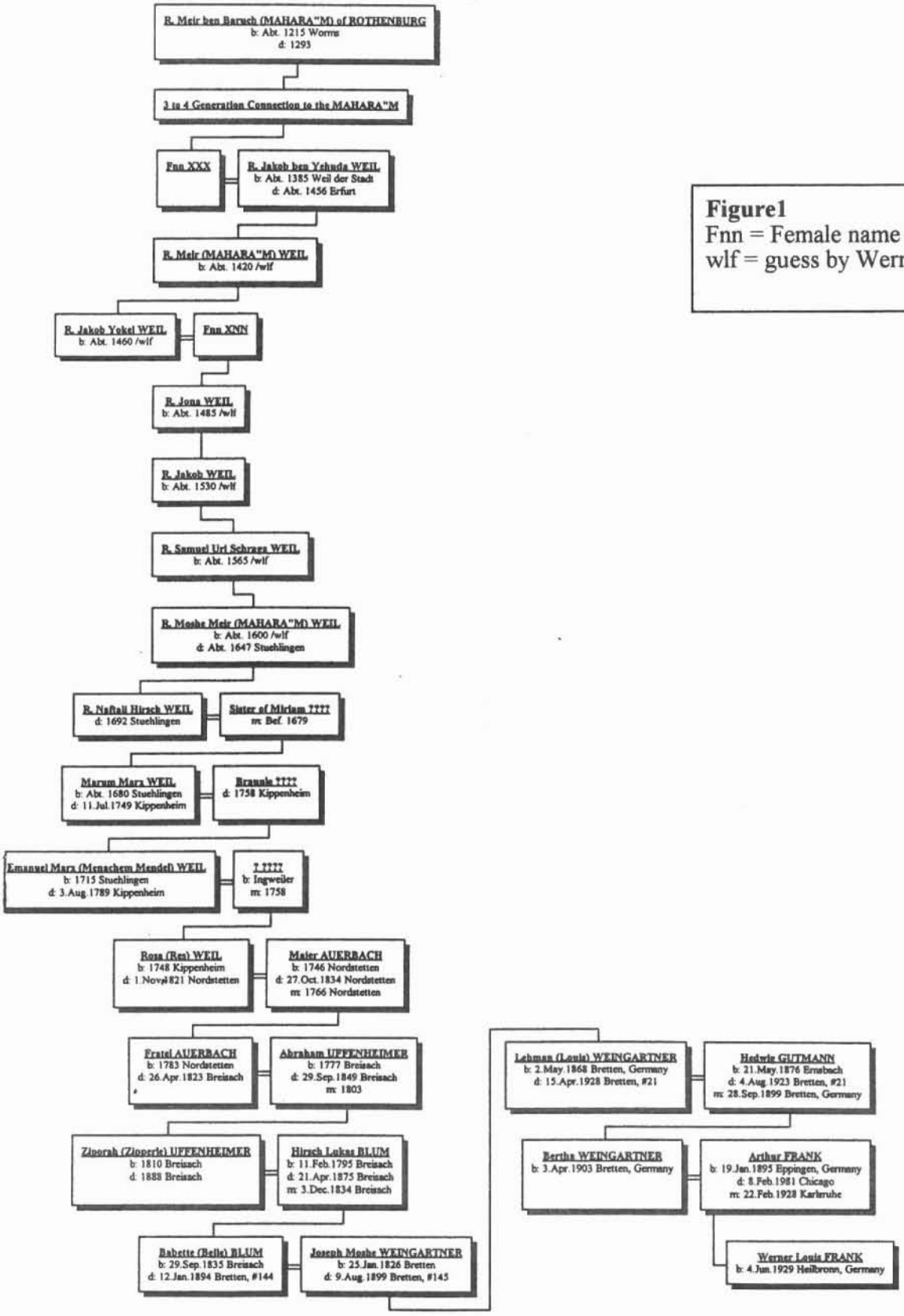

Figure1
Fnn = Female name not known
wlf = guess by Werner L. Frank

Descendants of R. Yehuda Weil

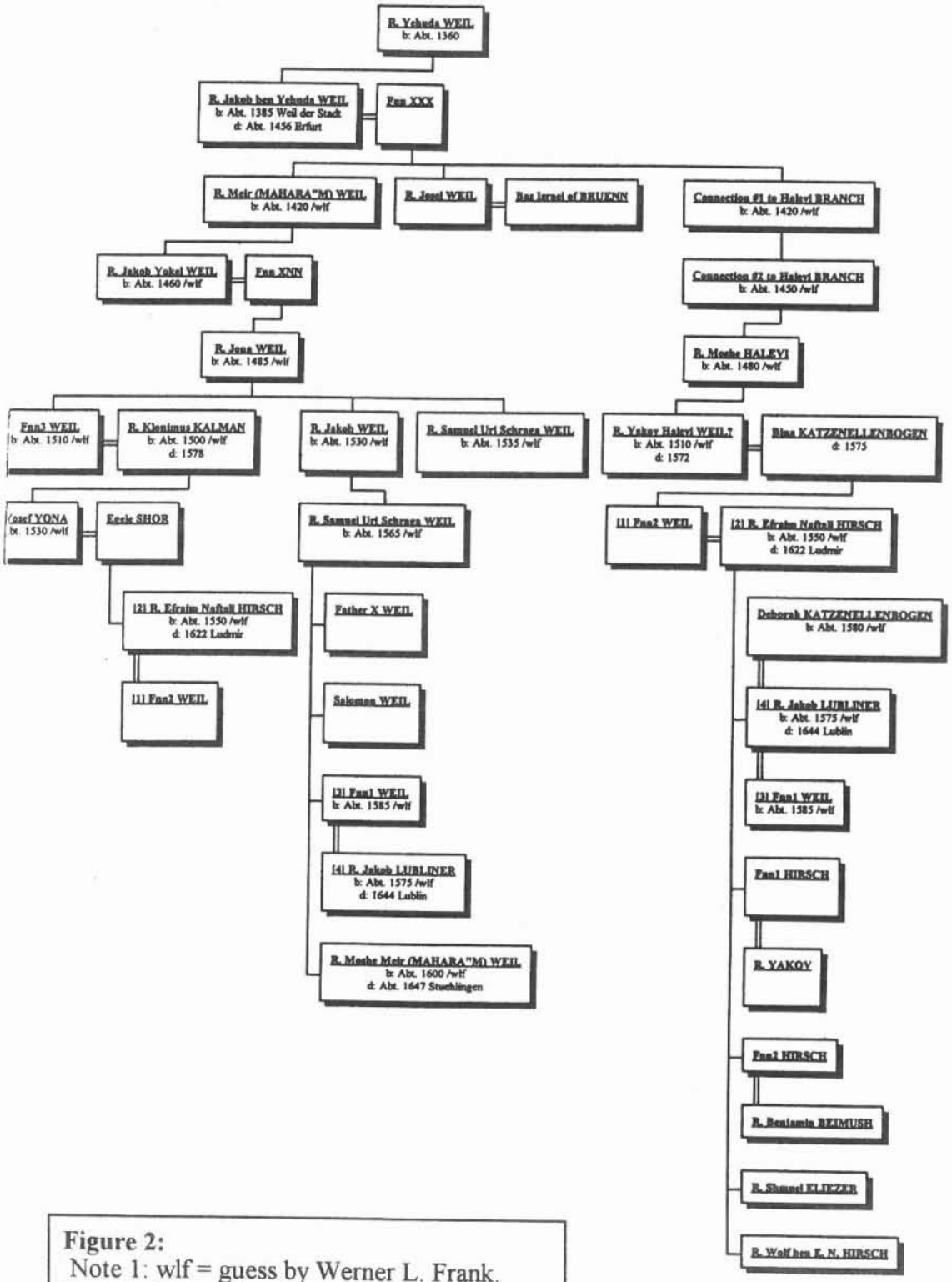

Figure 2:
Note 1: wlf = guess by Werner L. Frank.
Note 2 : Fnn = Female name not known

conclusion reached by Löwenstein, all relying on the specific *responsum* #15 attributed to Rabbi Juda Minz[12]. The relevant portion of this *responsum* is translated as follows:

I heard that the *Marari"v* (*z"l*) followed the thinking of the *Mahara"m* because he had a family connection with him.

There are two operative Hebrew words in this sentence, *mityaches* and *krovo*. It seems to me that my translation of "family connection" is as valid, if not more so, than the presumption made by others that the meaning suggests direct descent. In any event, the statement by Rabbi Minz "I heard..." is rather weak, certainly not convincingly stated at such a great distance from the stomping grounds of the Weils.

Bottom line: the comment could equally support a family connection to the *Mahara"m*, either through Jakob Weil or through his wife.

To further my position that the ascent to the *Mahara"m* is through the wife, there is a naming tradition among the Weils does not reflect the given names that are known with respect to the family of Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg. According to Zimmels [28], the *Mahara"m*'s brother is Abraham, he has two uncles who were rabbis, Josef and Nathan, and his father is named Baruch. None of these names appear in the line of descent of Rabbi Jakob Weil.

On the other hand, we observe that one of the sons of Rabbi Jakob Weil is called Meir or *Mahara"m*, a naming convention that probably is due to the son's maternal connection to Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg. The *Mahara"m* name is rather distinctive and was the topic of a paper authored by Bernhard Brilling, rabbi and genealogist [3]. Rabbi Brilling asserts that this name, also in such forms as Maram, Marum, Marim and Maron, is a clear sign of descent from Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg. He specifically notes the traditional belief that the first bearer of this name was the son of Rabbi Jakob Weil.

Subsequently, the name appears frequently among the descendants of the Weils, as well as in other families. Based on this analysis, we have a direct descendant chart of nineteen-plus generations, from Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg to this author as shown in Figure 1. Since there is a spread of around 170 years between the births of Rabbi Meir and Rabbi Jakob, it is likely that there are at least 3 or 4 missing generations encapsulated in the box marked "Connection to the *Mahara"m*." Furthermore, in *Mishpachot Atikot b'Yisrael* [18], the father of Rabbi Meir is identified as Rabbi Baruch ben Meir, adding thereby another two generations. This would make the span of the descendant chart from myself to Rabbi Meir, the grandfather of the Mahara"m, to be at least 23 generations, bridging a period of more than 800 years.

The Early Weil Generations. We have already seen in earlier chapters that Jewish family research reaches a solid wall in the mid-seventeenth century. Prior to the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648) there are almost no records of genealogical value. Three related issues contribute to the difficulty of tracing family continuity in this earlier period:

- The population as a whole went through great swings in size due to the severity of repeating epidemics and wars. Jews suffered the additional curses of the Crusades, periodically inflicted attacks, and continual dislocations from their place of residence.

- Written records were generally not maintained by the community until the latter part of the seventeenth century, or if available earlier, they were mostly destroyed during the Thirty Years' War.

- Jews in general did not carry surnames, making it very difficult to track families, a problem which was compounded by their excessive, mostly forced, mobility.

So, why are we blessed with such a significant amount of information regarding our Weil family? Records are available for rabbinical families for much the same reason that genealogical histories exist for royalty. Rabbis are generally

[12] Rabbi Juda Minz was a rabbi in Padua, Italy where he died in 1508 at around one hundred years of age, The Hebrew is: *Shamati sh'Mahari"v z"l halach acher da-at Mahar"m l'fi sh'haya mityaches acharov sh'haya krovo*, Rabbi Juda Minz was a cousin of Rabbi Moshe Minz (1415-1485) who was a student of Rabbi Jakob Weil. This may have been the conduit and source for the speculation contained in the *responsa* regarding R. Meir of Rothenburg.

Direct Descendants of R. Jakob ben Yehuda Weil

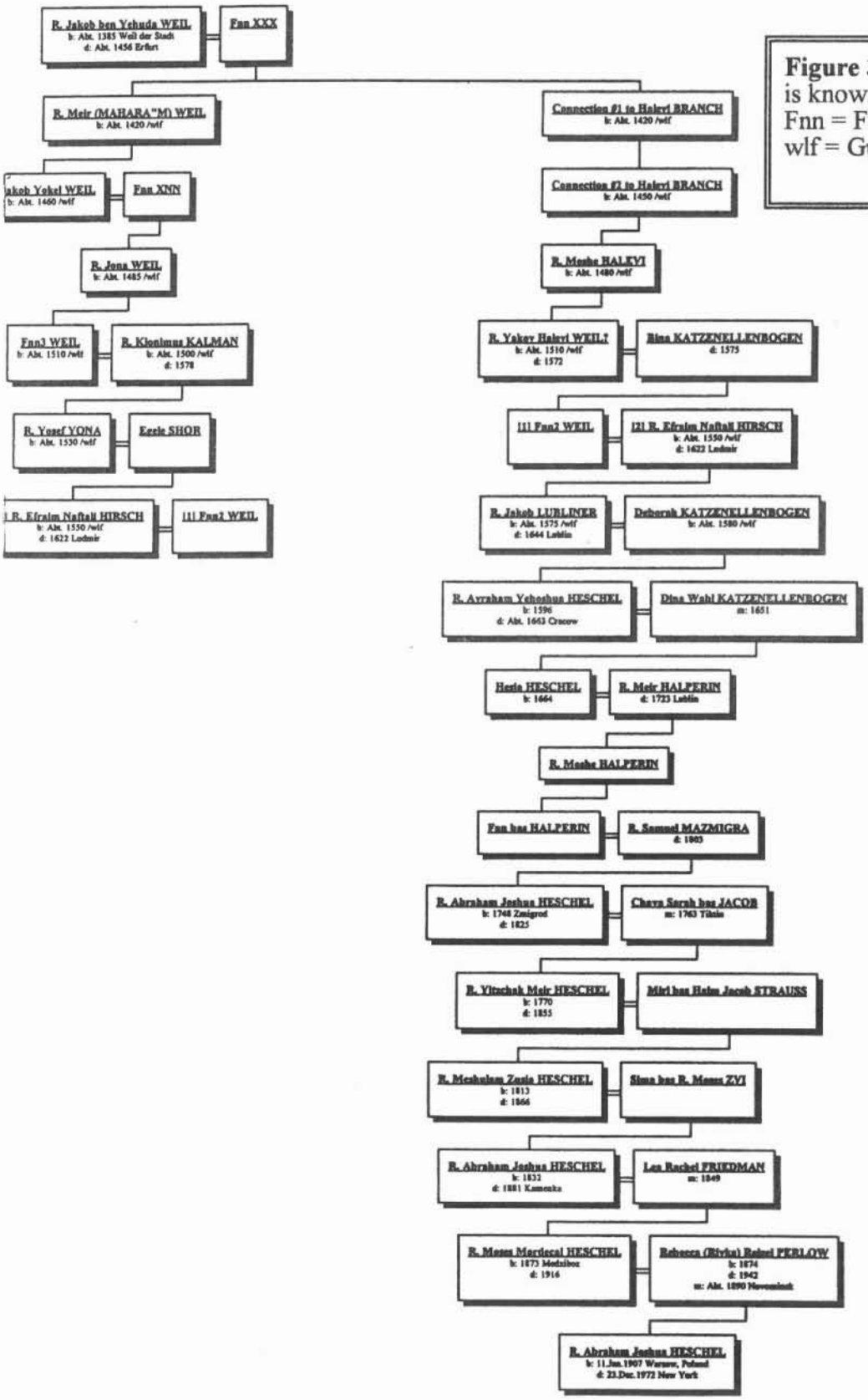

Figure 3 Klonimus Kalman also is known as Kalonimus.
Fnn = Female name not known
wlf = Guess by Werner L. Frank

known because they are identified with the towns they served, the *yeshivot* (religious academies) they attended or headed, and the books that they authored. Because of the rabbinical family practice of marrying among each other, there also exists a rich body of interlocking information that form large genealogical networks. These networks often include names of daughters and their (rabbinical) marriage partners.[13]

Perhaps the most unique source of information concerning the life and times of our rabbinical ancestors is contained in the widely preserved *responsa* already cited in connection with Rabbi Jakob Weil and Rabbi Meir of Rothenburg. Thousands of such *She-elot u Teshuvot* provide fertile research opportunities for ferreting out names and relationships of our forefathers.

There is yet another unique source for genealogical information. Rabbis and Jewish scholars observed a tradition of making personal introductions (*hakdamot*) and soliciting approbations (*haskamot*) as forewords to their published sacred writings. These prefaces have a twofold purpose: (1) to give credence to the authority of the author by virtue of praise and endorsement of his work by third parties and (2) to give honor, praise and admiration to the author's forebears, thereby claiming *yichus* (pedigree) on his own behalf. The preambles often include the lineage of the author and so it becomes important to genealogists. An example of such a presentation relating to my own research can be found in any current publication of the *Talmud Babli*. In the volume, *Shabbat*, heading off the portion *Korban Nathanel*[14], authored by Rabbi Nathanel Weil (1687-1769), the following recital is contained in the *Hakdama*:[15]

Nathanel; son of my esteemed father and holy Rabbi Naftali (z"l); son of the Torah scholar Rabbi Moses Meir, known as the Mahara"m from Stühlingen [Baden]; son of the honored Rabbi Samuel Uri Shraga; son of the Gaon and our teacher and rabbi, Jona Weil, AB"D [16] in the lands of Burgau, Swabia and Switzerland; son of the wonder of his age, our teacher Rabbi Jakob Weil, who was the AB"D in the great place of Donauwürth [sic] and all the lands of Bavaria; son of our teacher and rabbi, Mahara"m, AB"D in the lands of Ulm; son of the greatest Gaon, wonder of his age, our teacher and rabbi, Rabbi Jakob Weil, AB"D of Nürnberg, compiler of Shechitot v'Bedikot and She-elot u Teshuvot.

This lineage forms the basis on which Leopold Löwenstein compiled the 1898 comprehensive history of the Weil family [13]. He added an abundance of collateral information known to him at that time. Therein also lies one of a number of disputed aspects of this family history.

Dr. Löwenstein acknowledges that there was a controversy with respect to the Weil lineage. He cites the opinion of Rabbi Tiah Weil, son of Rabbi Nathanel, that there was a gap in the line-up of his family's pedigree.[17] Rabbi Tiah believed that there was a missing generation of a Rabbi Jakob Weil who should be rightfully placed as the son of Rabbi Jonah Weil and as the father of Rabbi Samuel Uri Shraga Weil. I am of the strong opinion that this is the case.

The time span between the births of Rabbi Jakob Weil, patriarch, and Rabbi Nathanel Weil is 300 years. The recitation of the above lineage recorded by R. Nathanel would yield an average generation of 43 years which is excessively long. The introduction of the additional Rabbi Jakob would bring this average down to 37 years, still considerably above the 25-year average that seems more typical for the period[18].

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13 The availability of female names and their progeny is unusual in Jewish genealogy since most early sources only trace the male lines. Thus, to identify a female ancestor often requires the discovery of her husband's family, from which vantage point one may be able to backtrack a connection to the distaff family.

14 The *Korban Nathanel* (Offering of Nathanel) is a supercommentary on the Talmudic explanation of the *Ro"sh*, Rabbi Osher ben Jechiel (1250-1328). Rabbi Nathanel Weil may have been drawn to interpreting the writings of the *Ro"sh* since the latter was a student of the *Mahara"m* of Rothenburg, the presumed ancestor of the Weil family.

15 Gerhard Sonder commented that the Weil rabbinic line was nationally broken in the fifth generation. He indicates that Samuel Uri Shraga, Moses Meir and Naftali may have only had the honorific title of *Chaver* and rabbi. This could well be true since one notes that the praise bestowed on these three ancestors in the *Hakdamah* of is devoid of an official rabbinical position as was the case for their forebears.

16 *AB"D* is the abbreviation for *Av Bet Din*, the Head of the Rabbinical Court, As will be seen later, there is a question regarding the accuracy of placing R. Jona Weil at this point in the chronology, as well as the location of his rabbinical jurisdiction.

17 See Löwenstein [13, p. 5 and Beilage 1, p. 40-44].

18 Twenty five years is the standard generation measure employed by researcher Michael Honey, creator of the Jewish Historical Clock. This unique computer based graphical

Another recording of the Weil family history can be found in *Mishpachot Atikot b'Yisrael* (Ancient Jewish Families) [18]. Here many rabbinical families are identified and linked due to the prevalent intermarriages. In particular, the Weil chain of rabbis are tied to the Shapiro and Halperin rabbinical dynasties, as well as showing the Weil relationship to the sixteenth century anchor of what has become the family of Rabbi Abraham Yehoshua Heschel of Cracow. The Weil chronology in this book recognizes the existence of the "additional" generation of Rabbi Jakob Weil.

After review of four other resources that deal with the lineage of the early Weil family, it appears that the Löwenstein book, based on the recorded lineage in the *Korban Nathanel*, is the only source that did not show this Rabbi Jakob Weil[19]. The evidence, therefore, seems heartily in favor of the additional generation of Rabbi Jakob.

The confusion regarding the presence and absence of the generation of Rabbi Jakob Weil has also led to a mix-up in the identification of the locations of rabbinical service by this rabbi and his father. My review of the literature points to the association of both R. Jona and his son R. Jakob with the community of Burgau, and the land of Swabia [Schwaben] and all of Switzerland. On the other hand, R. Tiah Weil notes in *Beilage 1* of Löwenstein [13, p.5 and 42] that R. Jona Weil had only served in Nördlingen and its surroundings (see also [18, p. 147]).

**

The eight generation descendant diagram of Figure 2 traces the beginning Weil history from R. Yehuda of the mid-fourteenth century to the generation of R. Moses Meir Weil, the *Mahara"m* of Stühlingen, of the early seventeenth century[20]. It is striking to note that the number of descendants in each generation is significantly limited by the available information. Since families were generally large, we observe that there are a lot of missing branches.

Figure 2 includes assumptions with respect to likely birth years for the line of descent in order to do a reasonableness check on the fit of a number of the descendants. The birth year guess is shown wherever a date includes my initials: */wlf*. Fortunately we had several boundary values with which to start the process: the birth year of Rabbi Jakob Weil estimated at 1385, the birth year of Rabbi Abraham Yehoshua Heschel in 1596, and the birth year of Rabbi Nathanel Weil in 1679. A generation separator of 25, 30, or 35 years was employed rather arbitrarily. It was through this process that two generations were postulated separating the *Mahari"v* from the R. Moshe Halevi branch.

Three important conclusions can be derived from Figure 2:

- There are a number of intra-marriages leading to multiple family inter-relationships.
- A number of Weil descendants married into other well known rabbinical families.
- Key family nodes are identified that can be further followed and analyzed.

Figure 2 shows two main lines of descent that we have been able to track to this day. The primary branch is that of Rabbi Jona Weil, author of *Hanekora*. A second branch emanates from Rabbi Moshe Halevi, a descendant of Rabbi Jakob Weil.[21] This branch is tied to the first

presentation shows the descendants of major rabbinical families dating from the thirteenth century, One such project undertaken by Honey (with my collaboration) is the Weil dynasty, There are, however, two good reasons why the span between two generations could be much longer. While the first child of a marriage might well be born within 25 years of his father's birth year, the last child of this union could, of course, be born when the father is in his fifties, Also, a longer generation span can be due to the multiple marriages that were common in that day. Thus, a son could be the issue of a second marriage, the widower often marrying a substantially younger woman. This situation can then lead to ages of nieces or nephews approximating the ages of their aunts or uncles.

[19] The four sources that acknowledge the identity of this Rabbi Jakob Weil are Weill [25], Sonder [20], Kahn [12], and *Minchat Nathanel* [6], In the latter reference a likely answer emerges from whence comes the confusion. Rabbi Jona Weil had two sons, a Rabbi Samuel Uri Schraga and Rabbi Jakob. The latter had a son with the same name as his uncle, namely Samuel Uri Schraga, who was the father of R. Moses Meir Weil, the *Mahara"m* of Stühlingen, Both Rabbi Nathanel Weil and Dr. Leopold Löwenstein [13] may have been confused by the presence of two successive generations, an uncle and nephew, both named Samuel Uri Schraga.

[20] Moses Meir Weil was deemed to be a wealthy individual and was seen as a Torah scholar in the recitation of the *hakdamah* to *Korban Nathanel*, The title *Mahara'm* is ascribed as a *mechuneh*, somewhat of a nickname, rather than the honorific designating a rabbinical authority, Hence, we conclude that he was probably not an ordained rabbi.

[21] The relationship of the Rabbi Moshe Halevi branch to the mainstream Weil family tree is cited in only one source known to me. *Mishpachot Atikot b'Yisrael* [18], states on p. 60 that Rabbi Moshe Halevi is a *neched* (grandson) to Rabbi Jakob Weil the *Mahari'v*. This can only be possible if he is the son of a

through the marriage of two female descendants – names not known – of Rabbi Jona (Fnn[22]) to Rabbi Jacob of Lublin and Fnn3 to Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman).

A granddaughter of R. Moshe Halevi married Rabbi Efraim Naftali Hirsch, rabbi in Brisk and Ladmir, who was the great grandson of Rabbi Jona Weil.[23] The relationship between this husband and wife is fourth cousins, once removed. Their son is Rabbi Jakob Lubliner, rabbi in Brisk and Lublin, who achieved great acclaim, being the target of the adage "from Rabbi Jakob Pollak to Rabbi Jakob from Lublin, there was no other Jakob in Poland."[24]

Rabbi Jakob from Lublin was married twice, his first wife being the daughter of Rabbi Samuel Uri Schraga Weil (also known as Shmuel Yotkes), making them second cousins, once removed. At least one source has created confusion regarding which of the two Samuel Uri Schragas (identified in footnote 19) was the father-in-law of Rabbi Jakob. In *Sefer Otzar Harebbi R. Heschel* [19, p.47] the connection is made with Samuel Uri Schraga, son of R. Jona, while other references show the more likely connection to be with Samuel Uri Schraga, son of R. Jakob [see, for example, 18].

Liaisons with other rabbinical families were profuse. A daughter of Rabbi Jona Weil married Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman, a descendant of fifteenth century Rabbi Israel of Regensburg and a grandfather of Rabbi Efraim Naftali Hirsch [18].[25] Their son, Rabbi Yosef Yona, married a daughter of the Shor family, the latter leading to connections to the very old sixteenth century rabbinical families headed by Rabbi Moshe Efraim Zalman Shor and Rabbi Naftali Hirtz Treivish.

There are also two marriages with daughters of the renowned Katzenellenbogen rabbinical family whose maternal line tracks back to the fourteenth century rabbinical families of Treves, Spira and Luria. In the first of these unions, Bina, daughter of the famous *Mahara"m* of Padua, Rabbi Meir Katzenellenbogen (1482-1564), married Rabbi Yakov Halevi Weil, the son of Rabbi Moshe Halevi [18]. By the looks of the naming pattern it appears that this Yakov Halevi took the surname Weil from his maternal ascent, possibly as a sign of respect for his greatgreat-grandfather Rabbi Jakob Weil, after whom he was apparently named.[26]

The second Katzenellenbogen marriage was between Rabbi Jakob Lubliner and his second wife, Debra [11, 27]. She was the daughter of Rabbi Meir Wahl Katzenellenbogen, the latter a grandson of the *Mahara"m* of Padua and son of Rabbi Saul Wahl (1545-1617). R. Saul Wahl was the incredibly famous, so-called "King for a Night"of Poland, so ably portrayed in *The Unbroken Chain* [15].[27] Debra and Rabbi Jakob had a son, Abraham Yehoshua Heschel (1596-1663), known as the Cracow rabbi, and the ancestor of the Heschel rabbinical dynasty that ultimately led to Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel (1907-1972) of blessed memory.[28]

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daughter of Rabbi Jakob, who might have married a Levite, since the Weil family are not *Levim*. It is highly unlikely that this relationship is possible because it would throw off the generations of the descendants. It is, therefore, likely that the term *neched* in this context is meant to convey descendant.

22 Fnn stands for Female no [known] name.

23 This connection of Rabbi Efraim Naftali Hirsch to the Weil family tree is yet another controversial point. In Löwenstein [13], Drazin [5] and Weill [25] this Rabbi is shown as a son of Rabbi Jona Weil, an error which has caused substantial confusion. The genealogy presented herein reflects the data in *Mishpachot Atikot b'Yisrael* [18, p. 68] and serves to clear up the misrepresentation. Actually, the paternal grandfather of R. Efraim Naftali Hirsch, Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman, married a daughter of Rabbi Jona Weil. One explanation for this error is due to the name of the father of R. Efraim Naftali Hirsch being Yosef Yona, sometimes just called Yona. Hence, Yona and Jona may have been thought to be the identical person. See also entry 3112 in *Otzar Harabbinim* [7].

24 This was a play on the more famous maxim: From Moses to Moses, there was none like unto Moses. This was a saying directed towards Moses Maimonides, a compliment of the highest order, equating the *Ramba"m* to Moses the lawgiver.

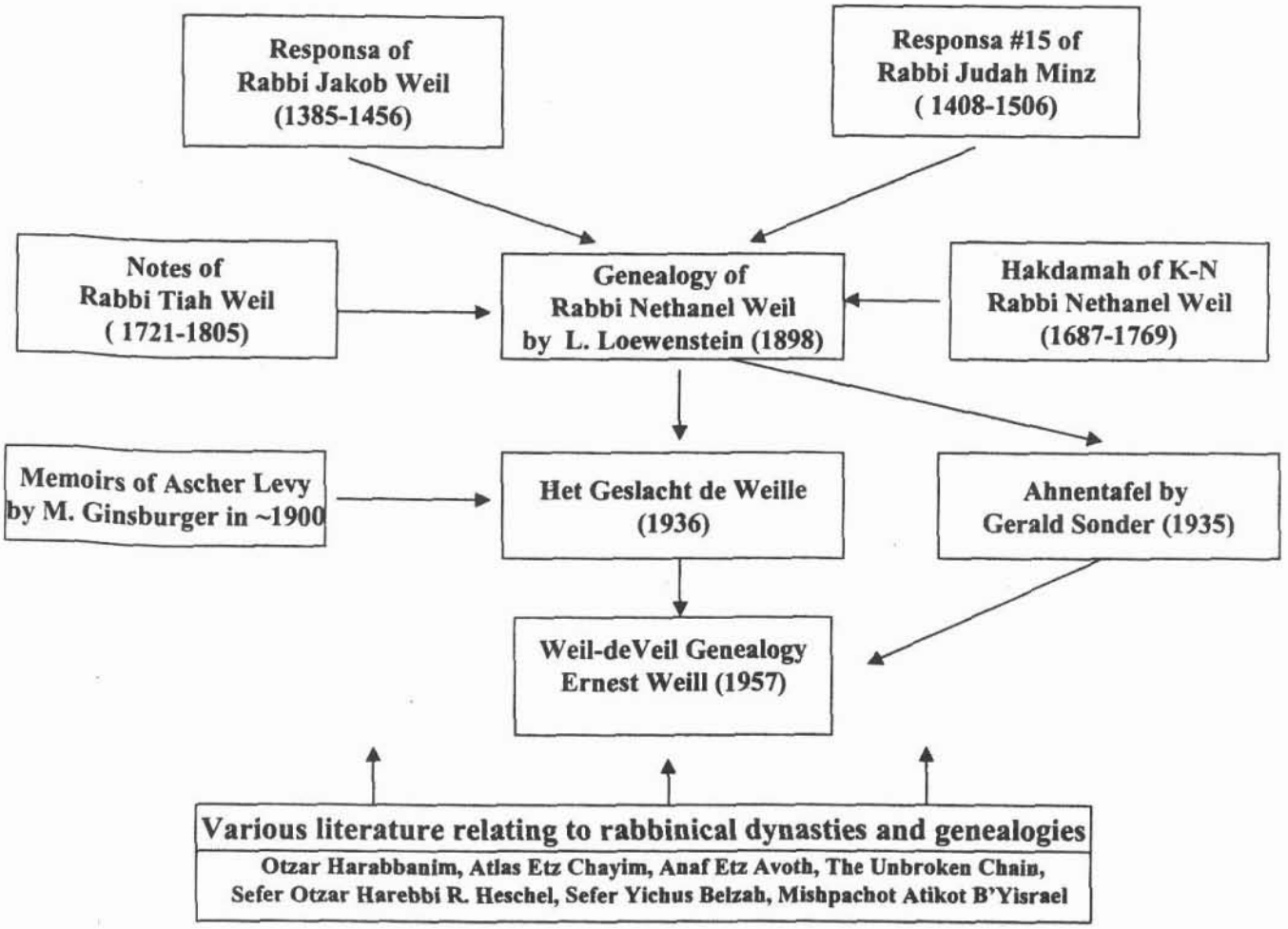
25 Another example of controversy. While most sources agree with this flow, at least one reference designates Rabbi Kalonimus Kalman as the son-in-law of Rabbi Jacob Yokel Weil [27].

26 The attachment of the surname Weil to this Levite branch has caused confusion among some of the sources which assumed a direct lineage with the mainstream Weils descending from Rabbi Jakob Weil. In [18, p. 68] specific reference is made to Rabbi Jacob Halevi Weil while in other sources the Weil label is not found [11 and 27],

27 There seems to be some truth to the legend of how Rabbi Saul Wahl stepped in to save a situation of royal succession in 1587. The princes of Poland could not decide on a successor to their recently deceased king. Hence, the rabbi was chosen to temporarily reign over Poland allowing the deliberations to continue for one day beyond the deadline for making a decision.

28 The Heschel branch leads to direct connections with the rabbinical Berlin/Berliner and Horowitz families, data for which I am indebted to contemporary Judith Hill Wolkovitch of Palos Verdes, California.

Bibliology of Primary Weil Family Sources



A direct descendant chart from Rabbi Jakob Weil to Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel is shown in Figure 3.

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Notably absent from the descendant chart in Figure 2 is another Halevi Weil family branch emanating from Rabbi Jacob Yokel Weil which is prominently featured in the work of Ernest Weill [25]. One of the genealogical sources feeding Ernest Weill's research was *Hets Geslacht de Weille* [4]. This Dutch book reaches an extremely tenuous conclusion regarding the de Weille connection with our family Weil, based on an early seventeenth century diary, *Die Memorien des Ascher Levi* [8][29]. Ascher Levi tracks his genealogy to a "*R. Jakob Ha Levi, Lehrhausvorsteher und Gerichtsvorsitzender in Landau*" who is also called Jequil Landau and was alive in 1500. For some undisclosed reasoning, the book jumps to the conclusion that this Jakob/ Jequil is our ancestor, Rabbi Jakob Yokel Weil (who certainly is not a Levite).

Two magazine articles repeat this ill-founded conclusion.[30] What makes the matter more than just a casual mistake is the notoriety of apostasy associated with this Levite family to whom Ernest Weill attached the family name of Weil. One of the descendants, Rabbi Moshe Asher HaLevi, was the first of three French-based generations of rabbis located in Landau and Metz. His son was Rabbi Feibusch HaLevi and his grandson was Rabbi David Vail de Weil. Three of the latter's great-grandsons ultimately converted to Catholicism.

The saga of the baptism of these three sons is detailed in Ernest B. Weill's book [25]. All three siblings became noted Christian theologians. They converted for a second time and ended up as Protestants in England and Holland. While the entire history of this family is told in [4] and repeated in [25], there really is no connection to the Weil family.

**

In order to sort out the flow of source data that ultimately builds the genealogical structure of our Weil family, it is necessary to understand the validity of each contribution and the dependency of the information. Hence, I submit a *bibliology* (fig.4) of the primary source material, showing how the various references fit together in yielding the flow of data from which is deduced the Weil history. From this chart it is possible to see the successive influences of prior works, and one can determine how incorrect data may have been propagated.

Based on our analysis, we can safely rule out two sources as irrelevant: *Die Memoiren des Ascher Levi,* and *Het Geslacht de Weille*. Both sources heavily contributed to the work of Ernest Weill [25], completely misleading his analysis as cited above. Since Weill has been a key reference in recent years, these errors have crept into a significant number of genealogical studies of the Weil family.

**

To round out this research, the search for sources had to go beyond the Western European (*Ashkenaz*) focus in the works represented in Figure 4. Shimon Shlesser [19] has noted two major problems in tracking the history of families back to the Middle Ages:

- Later generations forgot whether the pedigree trail to a key individual is through the male or female ancestor.

- The families had reasonable recall of their immediate direct ancestors but lost understanding of those that moved to distant locations. Hence, the family in Germany was not familiar with distant relatives in Poland, and vice versa.

Thus the books focusing on the rabbinical family genealogies of Eastern Europe have also become important assets in understanding the history of the Weil family in *Ashkenaz* since a number of Weil daughters married rabbis and scholars living in Poland.

These books include [10], [11], [15], [18], [19], and [27]. Of particular significance is the most recently published book, *Sefer Otzar Harebbi R. Heschel* [19] which delves into significant detail regarding the Weil family, and is rich in citing sources for its many observations and conclusions.

[29] This book was published in 1913 and includes the original Hebrew together with a translation into German by Moshe Ginzburger. A rich set of footnotes accompanies the German version.

[30] Dr. Fritz Schafferdt, in the *Israel. Kultusvereinigung*, Stuttgart, September 1961, pp.28-30. "*Rabbiner Jakob Weil aus Weil der Stadt*" and Rabbi Dr. Neufeld, in an unknown to me, "*Sie kamen aus einer Stadt im Schwarzwald, die Familie Weil.*"

The major problem in studying so many references are the ever present errors that seem to creep into almost every work. The conflicts among these sources needed sorting out and rationalization, which has been the objective of the present effort. I have weighed the inconsistencies and arrived at a most likely scenario based on all of the inputs. However, like other authors who preceded me (with greater scholarship than I can hope to muster), I must admit that I may also have included some errors which others will undoubtedly discern.

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A Slice of Nineteenth Century Life in the Hunsrueck

By Alfred Moritz[31]

A German publication, *Sachor*[32], devoted to Jewish-German history in the Rhineland-Palatinate, contains an article on "Jewish Education in 19th Century Laufersweiler[33]" in the Hunsrueck region of Rhineland-Palatinate.

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[31] 6413 Tilden Lane, Rockville, MD 20852

[32] "Die israelitische Schule in Laufersweiler" by Fritz Schellack, *Sachor*, Beitraege zur Juedischen Geschichte und zur Gedenkstaettenarbeit in Rheinland-Pfalz. Issue 14, Feb.1997 p. 51-53.

[33] Laufersweiler, in the Hunsrueck region, is densely wooded. Timber was a major (possibly the sole) asset of the townships. The Hunsrueck is bisected today by the Hunsrueck Hoehenstrasse, a scenic highway running from near Boppard to the Luxemburg border. It is somewhat similar to the Blue Ridge Parkway of Western Virginia.

It deals, in part, with a Moritz ancestor, Josef Löser, (also Loeser) who, with wife Esther Lazarus, had 11 children of whom two girls, Regina (also Rosina) and Wilhelmina, married two sons of Simon Moritz (1793-1862) of nearby Becherbach. They were David (1821-1881) and Ferdinand II (1830-1895) respectively. Thus the two sisters became sisters-in-law and the brothers became brothers-in-law.

David Moritz and Regina Loeser begat Isidor Moritz (1860-1908). He married Regina Wendel (1860-1938) from nearby Nahbollenbach, now part of Idar-Oberstein. Isidor and Regina had eight children, the eldest being my father, Ludwig (Louis) David Moritz (1884-1961).

The article recounts a civil dispute involving Josef Loeser and the Laufersweiler town authorities. Today we need to recall the daily life of these rural Jews almost two centuries ago. Jews were part of the live chattel a local ruler was allowed to "keep"– as one would "keep" geese or goats. He had to make periodic payments to his liege lord – the Emperor, or the Elector or the local Catholic Bishop. In turn, Jews paid for the *temporary* privilege of residence – the Schutzgeld or *Judengeld.* Inasmuch as Jews were considered much like foreign pagans, they had no rights. Their sources of income were limited to petty trading (livestock, used clothes and the like), and the lending of money, often a by-product of traders who extend credit.

Early in the nineteenth century, with the French annexation of this region in the course of the Napoleonic Wars, things changed for the better: Jews were granted most rights held by Christians: to exercise a profession, for example, and to own real estate. They also were subjected to the same obligations, like military call-ups. They had to give up the right to sign documents in Hebrew script, and to rely exclusively on patronymics to name their offspring.
By way of example, my traditional name is Israel bar David (Israel son of David) and my son is named David bar Israel (David son of Israel).

Mr. Moritz, as an accommodation, has a limited supply of *Die ehemalige Gemeinde Sien, Spuren und Erinnerungen* by Ruth and Ulrich Eckhoff. The book, listed under *LBI Accessions* below, dealing with a nearby village, was reviewed by Peter Landé in *Stammbaum*, Issue 15 and is listed among the LBI new acquisitions in this issue. He will send you a copy at his cost, $15, incl. postage & handling. Address below.

Jews were free to choose family names to their liking, as long as, in this region[34], the names were not place names, names of saints, or Hebrew names.

My ancestor Isaak bar Feis (or Veis) seems, early on, to have signed documents as "Isaak Becherbach", the name of his home town, but he eventually signed his name variously as "Isaak Moses","Isac Mosis" or "Moriz" and finally, "Isaak Moritz." He retained his Hebrew name only for liturgy.

To circumvent these restrictions, many adopted names which, to their co-religionists, were obviously Jewish. Everyone knew that "Loeser" was, in fact, "Eliezer" and that "Salm" was "Salomon", that "Hirsch or Cerf" were "Zwi" (deer[35], in German and French, respectively) and that Moritz was really Mosis.

The restrictions differed in other jurisdictions; they were relatively relaxed in the lands of the Hanseatic League, for example the free city-states of Hamburg or Luebeck.

It also became mandatory for Jews to learn to write German. Traditionally they wrote German in Hebrew characters, because they had learned their Hebrew letters as part of their religious instruction.

After the defeat at Waterloo of the "Corsican Ogre", most rights were withdrawn, only to be reinstated later. In 1834, those Jews who had resided permanently in these parts were finally granted the *Indigenat*, in essence, more nearly full citizenship rights, although there were regional variations, since no unified Germany existed before 1871.

Being "quasi-citizens", the Jews were to be

[34] [Comparable regulations in the Grand-duchy of Baden are especially well documented in a 1925 dissertation by Emanuel Dreyfuss, reprinted in a translated synopsis in Stammbaum Issue 16.]

[35] ["Hart" in British English.]

treated like any other citizen by being included, for the first time, in the Annals, the civil registers of the municipalities.

With teutonic thoroughness, the Laufersweiler Town Council recorded its sessions in great detail; we thus learn:

◊ In 1802, Elias Jacob, age 22, was the first "recorded" teacher of Hebrew.

◊ By 1835, Jewish children were to be taught German. Moise Frankel was selected.

◊ When the teacher of German complained that this Jew couldn't possibly teach the language of Goethe, the Town Council agreed. (The fact that he was being paid so much a head may have had something to do with the issue).

No sooner had this issue been resolved that another problem arose: what good German parent wanted his child to sit next to a ragamuffin, probably flea-bitten, smelling no doubt of garlic? Coincidentally the Christian schoolmaster let it be known that the schoolroom was, in any event, too small, and that the Jewish children were to be taught in a small alcove under the Jews' prayer-room.

Jews thus were asked to pay two school fees, with half the amount going to the German teacher, a Herr Steil. As newly minted Germans, they obediently did as they were told, except for one who had apparently realized that, as a full-fledged Buerger [citizen] he could no longer be pushed around: Grandpa Josef Loeser refused to pay two school fees. The matter went back and forth with grandpa sticking to his guns, that he couldn't afford two school fees, being that he had eleven kids, three of whom were currently in school (one of the three was probably my great-grandmother Regina (1828-1897), then six years of age).

The Town Council referred the matter to the Jewish Congregation which advised that Loeser wasn't any more destitute than anyone else, what with all those kids of his who were go-getters and brought in money....In short: he could pay.

Grandpa stood his ground even when, in 1837, Steil put a lien on some of his property – some potatoes, old clothes and miscellany. The Council finally gave in and paid Steil six Thaler out of the town kitty.

However, this resolution turned out to be but a truce: a Jewish war-veteran, with 16 years' service in the Hessian military, who had become a qualified Hebrew teacher, a Herr Scheuer, had the effrontery to utter words to the effect that he was delighted to be in such a lovely spot as Laufersweiler and was looking forward to receiving his allotment of wood, so that he could be comfortable during the cold season, known to be rough in these hills.

Here is what the Town Council made of what they considered his impudence:

First, the Jewish school is not "royal-government-sanctioned" but simply a "tolerated" school, because the schoolchildren are not tolerated in any Christian school due to all kinds of reasons, thus can only be considered an "unrecognized" school.

Second, the Jews use their teacher mostly as a Schaechter [kosher butcher] and if there were no kosher butchering, then they wouldn't have a teacher. Therefore there is no way that a township owes a living to a kosher butcher, because those two occupations aren't compatible.

Third, the Jewish teacher's assumption [of free wood] was due only to his greed and petty haggling. His [prior] indescribable joy disappeared the minute that little bit of wood was denied him.... Many a Christian township feels that, in the present time, it is not appropriate to give Christian assets[36] to the Jews for their enjoyment – assets which in all past wars were kept untouched and undisturbed. Furthermore, in order to retain a communal asset, the major part of the war-debt was paid through levies on private property so as not to dilute the communal assets.

And now we're supposed to live to see the day when these assets are to be distributed to the Jews. This is unthinkable for Christians, who are supposed to take into their midst a people who will neither eat nor drink with them[37] nor,

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[36] "...give Christian assets to Jews...." refers no doubt to the fact that, with their newly acquired *Indigenat*, Jews were to share in the town assets.

[37] One differentiator is that Jews generally drink few or no alcoholic beverages, save for an occasional glass of wine, possibly with a home-cooked meal. Jews were, at the time, mostly traders due to the prevailing

even less so, work with them, and are always on the lookout to bringing ruin to the Christians, as can be amply demonstrated in town.

The author of the research paper, Fritz Schellack, writes that although this last statement is typical of views prevailing at the time, he was unable to find, in the available archives, "any evidence of financial irregularities in trading practices, between farmers and cattle dealers...."

The incident shows that the main issue: local Jewish residents/citizens were now to be co-owners of the communal forests – of the wealth of the town, held in common since time-immemorial by the Christians. The holdings had been protected from foreign invaders, from the hated Jews, from the recent French. And now, the wood allocation was to be shared with Jews.....

Fifty years later, by the early twentieth century, the Jews of Rheinland-Pfalz had generally come to resemble their non-Jewish neighbors in their housing, dress, social behavior, music, folklore, superstitions and language. All attended the same schools.

Other than their religious practices, two distinguishing traits continued to differentiate the *Landjuden* (rural Jews) from their Christian neighbours – predominany Lutheran.

◇ their intermingling of a few dozen Hebrew or Yiddish words with German. A number of such words entered the German language: *meschugge* (crazy), *Schickse* (non-Jewish girl), *Kaff* (hick town).

◇ Families had a secret code to communicate numbers in business dealings. In our family, the code which passed from father to son was probably a rather common one, because it was easy to remember: each letter of the Hebrew expression, *masl broche*, stood for a number: thus MBEEE =15000 or LBH = 459. My father and uncles never used numbers, even when secrecy was not of the essence.

laws. They could not be tillers of the soil; this resulted in an additional resentment.
The "Landjude" therefor excluded himself from the neighborhood *Stammtisch* at the local tavern where gossip was exchanged and friendships formed, (and Jews were taunted.)

Epilogue: *The Loesers of Laufersweiler*

Wilhelmina Loeser married Ferdinand II Moritz on November 9,1859 and gave him nine children.(A "Ferdinand" had died in 1820 at four months of age. Thus the second one became Ferdinand II).

Wilhelmina and Ferdinand II, aged 60, emigrated to Milwaukee, WI, as they followed some of their children who had emigrated earlier. Five years later, Ferdinand was shot to death in the course of a mugging. Only one of their offspring – Gustav, known locally as *Eisicks Gustav* remained behind. He died in 1933 in Becherbach.

All of the descendants of Wilhelmina and Ferdinand II Moritz live in the USA where a number retain their Jewish faith. Others are followers of some of the many Christian sects. A number in the Southern States became Southern Baptists.

The *Memorbuch,* a memorial book, (copy at the U.S. Holocaust Museum in Washington DC) compiled under the auspices of the post-war German government, lists the last Laufersweiler Loeser. She is Magdalena Loeser, nee Levi on 18 Jan 1863. She was deported from the ancestral seat of Laufersweiler at age 79, perished in the Theresienstadt (Terezin) Concentration Camp in Czechoslovakia, presumably upon arrival there, some time in 1942.

Subject to the results of on-going research, it is conceivable that, given her 1863 birth date, her husband may have been either one of the 11 children, or a grandchild, of Josef and Esther Loeser of Laufersweiler.

Adoption of Family Names: Posen

By Edward Luft, Washington, DC

Here is an addition to the list of laws on the adoption of family names[38]. The Grand Duchy of Posen was separately administered from Prussia from 1815 to 1850, when it became the 17th province of Prussia. It was ruled by the King of Prussia in his capacity as Grand Duke of Posen, a title awarded at the

[38] *Stammbaum*, Issue 17, p. 25.

Congress of Vienna in 1815. The Royal Decree for Posen itself was promulgated on 30 July 1833. South and New East Prussia were given to Russia in the Congress of Vienna and Prussia was moved further west as a bulwark against a resurgent France.This caused the first wholesale adoption of last names (other than by leading Jewish families). Most of the Jews who did receive last names did so in 1834 and 1835. The acquisition of Posen by Prussia more than doubled the number of Jews in the Kingdom. Furthermore, these Jews were largely poorer and less well educated than the general level of Jews in the Kingdom in other provinces. Posen was Poland's richest province in 1772 (and 1793), and Prussia's poorest the day after its surrender.

Berlin's "Invisible Holocaust Victims"

By Peter Landé, Washington, DC

All of us who have tried for years to determine the fate of Berlin Jews, relatives or friends, have faced many frustrations. First of all, the records of those who emigrated safely, or who survived somehow inside Germany or German-occupied Europe, are incomplete, though there are many more sources of information than are generally known. Moreover, determining who was murdered in the Holocaust poses many problems. The German government and Berlin Gedenkbücher are useful, but incomplete. Many names are missing and, even when a name appears, and the place of deportation, e.g. Riga or Lodz, is noted, there is often no information on that person's final fate, i.e. the books simply state "verschollen."

Recent "discoveries" of filmed material make this search somewhat easier. As part of a much larger collection of concentration camp records, it has been possible to identify three reels which appear to contain lists of all Jews deported from Berlin.

These lists were attached to memoranda from the Gestapo to the Oberfinanzpräsident Berlin. Each letter states that the Jews listed in the attached were deported, or committed suicide, or died of natural causes *[sic]*, and directs the Oberfinanzpräsident to seize their property under the Reichsbürgergesetz. Many of the names have already appeared in the Gedenkbücher cited above, but the books' editors appear to have been working from more difficult to read copies. The "new" films, while they also contain lists which are not easy to read, should help to fill in gaps in information (Given the magnitude of the task, over 50,000 names, it is impossible for me to make a name by name comparison of the books with the film.)

The present article focuses on a tiny segment of the collection, the names of 483 Jews, primarily from Berlin, whose names do not appear in any Gedenkbuch, nor are they survivors. They are Jews who died of "natural causes," if anything in the life of a Jew in Berlin in the 1940s might be considered "natural". They are not listed in the major memorial books since their editors had decided that only persons who had been murdered or had committed suicide should be included.

Sophisticated researchers looking for names, which do not appear in printed material, have often looked for these persons in the records of the Weissensee cemetery, but there is no guarantee that all Jews were buried there. Civil records exist, but, in accordance with Datenschutz, information on deaths is generally limited to direct ancestors; not uncles, aunts, cousins....

The small collection I have come across and computerized covers the period from July 1943 through March 1945. (Presumably there is similar information on earlier deaths as well as deaths in other cities, but I have been unable to locate this to date). The collection is not easy to read but I was able to identify 480 of the 483 names. Included are names, including maiden name for women, and date of death. The material often includes date and place of birth. In a few cases where the individual apparently died outside Berlin, this is noted as well. Street address was also included, but I have not computerized this information. (If street address is of special interest to individual readers, they may contact me and I shall furnish it.)

Some readers may be surprised that so many Jews were not deported and, in fact, many more were not deported and survived. Some of this was due to distinctions under the Nuremberg

laws for persons with parents/grandparents who were not Jews. In other cases, a Jew might be married to a non-Jew, while in other cases an individual might occupy a position, which was considered so important that he/she was not deported. Of course, all these distinctions were administered in a highly arbitrary manner and a person spared from deportation at one point often was deported later.

The list of 480 names has been sent to the U. S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Leo Baeck Institute in New York, the Bundesarchiv, and the Landesarchiv Berlin. Copies will also be sent, on request, to other institutions. More conveniently for individual researchers and institutions, the list will appear on Jewishgen <www.jewishgen.org> where it can be examined or downloaded.

With respect to the overall Berlin filmed collection, as noted above, the vast majority of names which appeared on the Gestapo lists are included in the current edition of the Berlin Gedenkbuch. Given the number of names in this filmed collection, it is far too difficult to look through the entire collection for individual names which are not in the Gedenkbuch. However, since the collection is arranged by transport, if an inquirer can identify a transport I would be prepared to search for a name. Otherwise, researchers will have to wait for a new Gedenkbuch or be prepared personally to review the filmed material at the U.S. National Archives or the Holocaust Museum.

The Stonemason Marx Koppel in Noerdlingen

By Rolf Hofmann[39]

At the dawn of the twentieth Century, M. Koppel & Sons employed 40 men and thus was one of the most important employers in Noerdlingen (Bavaria). The company was well known for its marble and granite products, offering tables, wash stands, stairs, tiles for walls and pavings, and switchboards for electrical systems. But the Koppel Company was also well known for its tombstones.

[39] D-70186 Stuttgart, Libanonstr.79. FAX 49-711-463799

Jewish cemeteries in Southern Germany still show the skillful headstones of Marx Koppel and his sons, their signature being chiseled at the bottom, noticed only by sensitive spectators. But even those who see the name "Koppel" don't know anything about the company and its founder. People don't even realize "Koppel" as a name of Jewish origin because it looks so German.("Koppel" was a nickname for "Jacob.")

The Koppel family had a long tradition in Kleinerdlingen, a tiny village outside the powerful medieval village of Noerdlingen. In 1508, when all Jewish families were expelled from Noerdlingen, they settled in the surrounding villages.

Kleinerdlingen was one of them. The earliest member of the Koppel family so far known was Joseph Koppel, allowed to settle there in 1755, and to raise a family. His great-grandson became Marx Koppel, who was born in 1840 as a son of a "Glasermeister" (glazier).

Marx Koppel started his professional career as a glazier (like his father), but then switched to sculpture making; around 1890 he founded a marble cutting and polishing company in Noerdlingen. By 1900 his two sons David and Emil Koppel had become partners in the flourishing company. Even His Royal Highness, Prince Louis of Bavaria, was impressed when he visited the workshops, with their modern technical equipment, since he had visited Carrera and the working atmosphere at the Koppel Company in Noerdlingen reminded him greatly of the Italian tradition of cutting and polishing marble.

Koppel & Sons was situated next to the Noerdlingen train station, which in fact was a combination of two stations operated by different railway systems. There was the "Bavarian station" and the "Wuerttemberg station" as Noerdlingen was a border town for both kingdoms until 1918 (when both became part of the new Weimar Republic). Being connected to two kingdoms within Germany by railway was a great competitive advantage. The marble rocks could easily be brought to the workshops, and at the end of the artistic process, the marble products could be easily delivered to customers all over Southern Germany. Grave monuments can still be found today in distant places including Stuttgart, Munich and Huerben (near Augsburg).

Koppel & Sons was an outstanding marble company under Jewish ownership. This was special, because most other stonemasons were Christians. When Marx Koppel (who then called himself "Max") died in 1917, he was 77 years old. He left a business that was unique not only for Noerdlingen, but also for the surrounding area. His sons David and Emil Koppel went on with the company until David died in 1934, age 61. By then it was very difficult for Jewish businessmen to survive in Germany as they were forced to give up their companies and sell them to "Aryan" owners at a low price. Emil Koppel did so too, then lived quietly for a few more years, after so many years of successfully running a family-owned marble company.

Emil Koppel died in 1941 in Noerdlingen age 69. Nobody there recalls him today.

Accessions, LBI Library

Aktenzeichen "unerwuenscht": Dresdner Musikerschicksale und nationalsozialistische Judenverfolgung 1933-1945 / ML 3776 A48 1999 (new) New Call Number: ML 3776 A48 1999

Hier und jetzt: Bilder und Texte vom juedischen Leben in Koeln ; ein Fotobuch von Herbert Sachs / DS 135 G4 C65 New Call Number: q 9

Die Landjudenschaften in Deutschland als Organe juedischer Selbstverwaltung von der fruehen Neuzeit bis ins neunzehnte Jahrhundert: eine Quellensammlung / DS 135 G32 L36 1996 (new) New Call Number: DS 135 G32 L36 1996

Spuren juedischer Vergangenheit in Aisch, Aurach, Ebrach und Seebach / DS 135 G4 F68 New Call Number: st 134

Spuren und Erinnerungen: die ehemalige juedische Gemeinde Sien ; Ausstellung vom 9. November bis 5. Dezember 1998.[40] DS 135 G4 S553 1998 (new) New Call Number: DS 135 G4 S553 1998

Arnsberg, Paul, 1899-1978. *Bilder aus dem juedischen Leben im alten Frankfurt* DS 135 G4 F7 New Call Number: DS 135 G4 F7 A71

Arnsberg, Paul, 1899-1978. *Die juedischen Gemeinden in Hessen* / DS 135 G4 H48 New Call Number: Ref. DS 135 G4 H48 A75

Ephraim Carlebach Stiftung, Leipzig.. *Taetigkeitsbericht fuer das Jahr 1997* / q DS 135 G4 L388 E64 (new) New Call Number: q DS 135 G4 L388 E64

Ephraim Carlebach Stiftung, Leipzig.. *Taetigkeitsbericht fuer das Jahr 1999* / DS 135 G4 L388 New Call Number: q 15

Feist, Chanan. *The History of the Jewish Community Nordhausen* / DS 135 G4 N67 New Call Number: q 20

Haas, Norbert J. *Kehrten juedische Mitbuerger nach der NS-Diktatur nach Bamberg zurueck?* / DS 135 G4 B22 F65 1999 (new) New Call Number: DS 135 G4 B22 F65 1999

Jerusalem. Yad va-shem. *Blackbook of localities whose Jewish population was exterminated by the Nazis* D 810 J4 J32 New Call Number: ARC/ PROF D 810 J4 J32

Kober, Adolf, 1879-1958. *Zur Geschichte der Juden Wiesbadens in der ersten Haelfte des 19. Jahrhunderts* / DS 135 G4 W56 New Call Number: DS 135 G4 W56 K6

Leo Baeck Institute of Jews from Germany. *Yearbook* / DS 135 G3 A262 New Call Number: DS 135 G3 A262 v.1-43 st 21 v.44

Loebl, Herbert, 1923-. *Juden in Bamberg: die Jahrzehnte vor dem Holocaust* / DS 135 G4 B22 L64 1999 (new) New Call Number: DS 135 G4 B22 L64 1999

Ullmann, Sabine. *Nachbarschaft und Konkurrenz : Juden und Christen in Doerfern der Markgrafschaft Burgau, 1650 bis 1750* / New Call Number: st 44

[40] Also see the article by Moritz in this issue.

U. S. Sources for German Publications

Information provided by courtesy of the German Consulate, NY. You may also purchase or find information about German books from Germany's online retailers, like www.buecher.de or www.amazon.de.

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Another Austrian "Discovery"

By Peter Landé, Washington, DC

Will wonders never cease? It has taken the Austrian Government a mere 55 years to "discover" that its Finance Ministry had complete records on the deportation of Jews from Austria and the seizure of their property. As was the case in Germany, the Gestapo regularly sent lists of deportees to the Finance Ministry, which was responsible for the seizure of real estate, bank accounts and other financial assets, and every other "asset" down to furniture and dish towels. What is unique about Austria, is that this government consistently denied having these files although for all these years it knew that the records were held at its Finance Ministry.

Grotesque aspects of this coverup have now appeared in the Austrian press. For example, one person wrote to the Finance Ministry seeking information on the financial assets of a relative who had perished in Theresienstadt. The Ministry replied that, unfortunately, such information was not held at the Finance Ministry, adding that it would appreciate any information that the inquirer could provide. The correspondence was then filed with the financial records, which the Ministry had claimed did not exist.

The entire files have now been transferred to the Austrian National Archives, where, after they have been cataloged, perhaps, they will probably be made available to inquirers. Of course, since Austria has never enacted restitution laws similar to those which exist in Germany, the release of this information, if it takes place, will have no practical effect. The issue of restitution and the entire history of Anschluss is currently being examined by a panel of "wise men." The report may some day appear but do not hold your breath for any Austrian action, since after all, we all know that Austria was a "victim."

There is, however, a positive footnote to this "discovery". The Dokumentationsarchiv in Vienna, which has for many years been trying to put together a memorial book based on only partially legible deportation lists obtained from Yad Vashem, now has a better and more complete source of information on Jews deported from Austria.

My confident prediction: during the next decade Austria will cease to be the only country in Western Europe which does not have a memorial book of some sort and by the next century Austria will acknowledge its active collaboration with Germany in the plundering and murder of Austrian Jews. As to restitution, this is likely to take place in accordance with the famous Austrian legend, "Remember that Beethoven was an Austrian and Hitler a German." Keep tuned for new "discoveries."

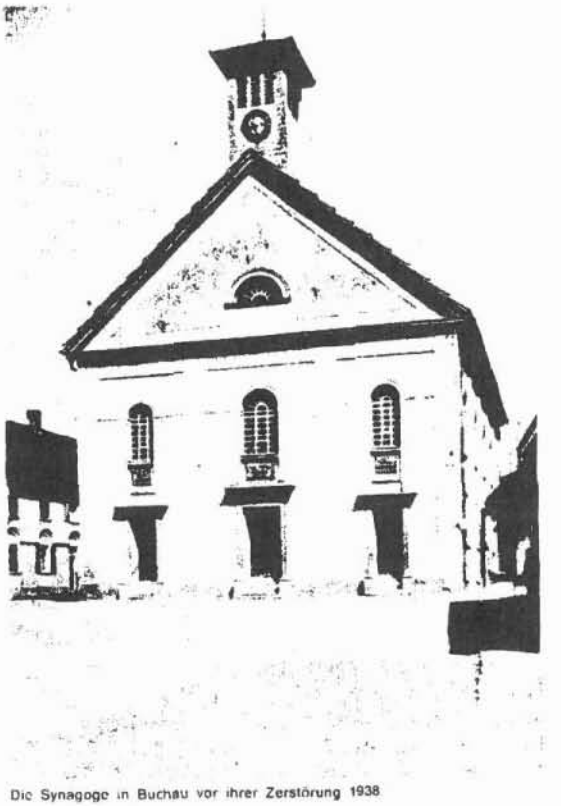
Buchau: Witches, Angels & Devils

By George E. Arnstein

Johann Evangelist Schoettle, a Roman Catholic priest, in 1884 published a conscientious history of the southwestern German town of Buchau, today Bad Buchau. He included a major section on the Jews who, at one point, made up some 30 percent of the total population.

He notes that among the contributors to the new synagogue was King Wilhelm I of Wuerttemberg, who also attended the dedication ceremonies in 1839.

The synagogue was destroyed by storm troopers



Die Synagoge in Buchau vor ihrer Zerstörung 1938

Buchau Synagogue with unique bell tower 1938

during Kristallnacht, just a few months before the centennial of the dedication .Details next page.

Schoettle fails to mention the quandary produced by the royal gift, specifically for the bell and clock-tower, as if it were a Christian church with a steeple. The congregation felt that it had to accept. It installed a carillon, replaced by a bell in 1854.

The bell had a Hebrew inscription from Psalm 122:1. In translation it reads: "I rejoiced when they said onto me: We are going onto the house of the Lord." Result: Buchau had the unique synagogue with a bell and clock-tower in Germany, probably the only one in the world.

Schoettle's section on the Jewish community begins with the first Jew to be recorded (after an earlier contingent disappeared): Baruch Mosis Ainstein in 1635, ancestor of Albert Einstein. Abraham Neiburger, probably my direct forebear, appears on a 1693 Buchau tax list of ten families.

Schoettle's tone is rather neutral, even when he describes conversions of some Protestants, and also of Jews. He reviewed all of the archives and listed many events, major and not so important, such as:

o In 1706 Matharina Manz from Stuttgart was accused of witchcraft and theft of church property. [He cites no outcome].

o On 16 July 1725 the house of Michael Menz was hit by lightning and burned totally.

o On 3 Sep 1746 Elisabetha Kolb from Ruppertshofen was burned in Buchau because of witchcraft.

Schoettle has a section to religious conversions:

o "On 13 December 1736 Isaak Neuburger, from the tribe of the Ferventer[41] was baptized. He had applied as early as December 1735. He was accepted and, after ten months of instruction and three examinations, received holy baptism Sponsors were the Princess Maria Theresia, countess von Montfort but, because she was very old and had reigned for 43 years, she was represented by the lady of the Stift [convent], Maria Theresia; and Abbot Simed from Schussenried, represented by Landold, head of his chancery."

"The ceremonies are of interest [writes Schoettle]. On the day of baptism at nine in the morning, the candidate carried a candle and walked between his [newly designated] spiritual parents, preceded by a 'guardian angel' in a white gown. Five 'devils' followed him to the portal of the [local] church. There he was received by six 'angels' and brought by the parish priest with cross and flag to the transept where the holy ceremony was performed according to the Roman ritual.

"When he responded to the final question – renunciation and repudiation of Judaism – with a 'Yes,' the six *[sic]* devils noisily left the temple. There was great ceremony after the baptism during which he received holy communion."

"Neuburger died on 20 August 1773. He took the name of Joseph Xaver Peregrinus Walter and chose Franz Joseph Walter and Maria Theresia Reiser as his spiritual parents. This was recorded by Father Bendel."

Genealogy. It is almost certain that Isaak Neuburger was a son of Abraham Neiburger, listed in a 1693 Buchau tax list of 10 Jewish families. By 1722 there were heads of Neuburger families named Abraham, Hurschle and Judas, part of 48 Jewish families which exceeded the quota of 45 resident families in Buchau.

Sources: Joh. Evang. Schoettle, *Geschichte von Stadt und Stift Buchau*. Waldsee: Carl Liebel, 1884. Reprinted Bad Buchau: Federsee Verlag, 1977.

Familienregister der Isr. Gemeinde Buchau, 1809-1853.

Joseph Mohn, *Der Leidensweg unter dem Hakenkreuz*, Stadt Bad Buchau, 1970.

Reinhold Adler, *Beitraege zu einer Geschichte der israelitischen Gemeinde Buchaus...* Biberach: Kreisarchiv Nr.961.Typescript thesis 1973

[41] [I do not know what this means. ga]

Destruction of the Buchau Synagogue – 1938

Joseph Mohn served as mayor of Buchau after WWII. In *The Road of Sorrows under the Swastika*, 1970, cited above, he clearly meant to do right by the victims when he wrote his book.. Based on court records he gives an account of the burning of the Buchau synagogue,; he calls it a crime and a blasphemy. Interestingly he, respected citizen of Buchau, omits all last names, sometimes uses a mere initial, even as he notes that the names are in court records. Here is part of his account:

On 9 November the head of the SA [storm troopers] Brigade 56 in Ulm (name in court records) ordered the SA regiment Ochsenhausen (name of leader also in court records) to burn the Buchau synagogue. With several lieutenants and a squad of dedicated brownshirts in civilian clothing he went to Buchau.

Shortly before midnight [they] poured gasoline over the church [sic] seats and lit them. When police and fire fighters arrived, they were allowed to protect only neighboring houses. A flame shot up, then went out, as the criminal enterprise failed.

The storm troopers then moved through the town, threw stones at Jewish homes, broke windows, and also went into Jewish lodgings. They beat Martin Kahn, a cattle dealer who resisted, and severely mistreated him. On 10 Nov almost all male jews were arrested; 12 were sent to Dachau concentration camp. Their names: [here omitted.]

The leader of Brigade [56], when he learned of the failed arson, came to Buchau and told the mayor, who reportedly did not favor the destruction, that he had orders to burn the synagogue....After an inspection, he caused the torah and valuable art objects to be removed.

The Brigade Commander supervised the arson... and on 11 Nov during the early morning the synagogue burned brightly. Police and fire fighters again were not allowed to interfere....

But this time again the exterior walls remained standing until 18 Nov, when army troops from Ulm blew them up. The holy torah rolls and valuable art objects are still missing.

Book Reviews

Institut Theresienstädter Initiative (ed.): *Theresienstädter Gedenkbuch: Die Opfer der Judentransporte aus Deutschland nach Theresienstadt 1942-1945.* Praha: Academia Publishers & Berlin:Metropol Publishers, 2000.
ISBN: 3-932482-35-2 (in Germany), distributed by Metropol Publishers, Berlin
ISBN: 80-200-0793-8 (in the Czech Republic), distributed by Academia Publishers
DM 89./SFr 88./ÖS 630.

Reviewed by Fritz Neubauer, Universitaet Bielefeld Fritz.Neubauer@Uni-Bielefeld.de

This is the third in a series of memorial books devoted to the victims of what the Germans called Theresienstadt (Terezín.) The first two volumes published in 1995 list the deportees from what is now the Czech Republic (Bohemia and Moravia). Entitled *Terezinska pametni kniha* (Memorial Book of Terezin), they list the names of 73,608 Jews from these areas.

The third volume which appeared only a few months ago lists the 42,124 deportees from 19 collection points in Germany within the pre-1938 borders, and of the 25 children born in Theresienstadt. For example Königsberg, Oppeln and Danzig are included, but not Vienna or Graz, as the occupation of Austria took place in 1938). However, the victims deported from Austria, with the biographies of a few survivors, are listed in the book edited by Steinhauser, Mary and the Dokumentationsarchiv des österreichischen Widerstandes: *Totenbuch Theresienstadt: Damit sie nicht vergessen werden.* Wien: Junius Verlag,1987. An earlier edition appeared in 1971.

The main part of the book (770 pages) consists of the entries for each person, listed in alphabetical order within the chapters for each town from which the transport left. Each entry has four lines such as this first one in the book.

Aal Jutta = Last name, first name
✡ 16. 11. 1860 = date of birth

I/45 - 14. 8. 1942 = number of transport - arrival date in Th.
▼ Theresienstadt 1. 9. 1941= death date if death occurred in Th.

If the death did not occur in Theresienstadt, the fourth line provides data about the deportation to another camp, the liberation in Theresienstadt, or in another camp, or through the only transport to Switzerland.

This sample entry shows that there was no space for information about the relationships between the deportees, birth place, maiden name or address before deportation. If people with the same last name were deported in the same transport from the same place (together with another 1000 people), a family relationship may exist. This limits the genealogical usefulness.

On the other hand, the most useful tool for research is the index of names (124 pages, three columns each) in alphabetical order which leads to the four-line entries. It allows searchers to gain final certainty about the fate of family members known to have been left behind in Germany, or to discover previously unknown branches of their family in Germany before the war. With the basic data in hand, the Terezín Museum could possibly provide more detailed data not given in the book (Památník Terezín, 411 55 Terezín, Czech Republic, E-mail: archiv@pamatnik-terezin.cz

The book also includes a history of Theresienstadt from 1941 to 1945 by Miroslav Kárný: information about Heydrich's order to build the camp, the reasons for transports to the East at various times, their interruptions, the infamous visits of the International Red Cross to Theresienstadt, Michal Frankl's description of the volume's sources, statistics about the number of transports from each place with dates, numbers of victims and survivors plus a chronology of all the transports to and from Theresienstadt in chronological order.

The volume is primarily a reference tool; it belongs in libraries with Holocaust holdings. It is hoped that further volumes with the list of deportees from areas not yet covered in the existing three volumes will be published in the foreseeable future.

Additional information on the Theresienstadt book. Because the German Government's Gedenkbuch dealt only with West Germany, Professor Neubauer's review of the Theresienstadt book is particularly valuable for researchers seeking information on relatives from *Eastern* Germany. The Theresienstadt book is a highly useful starting point in Holocaust research.

Peter Landé, a volunteer at the U.S Holocaust Museum, and a member of the Stammbaum Advisory Committee, collected additional information, on Jutta (Gutta) Aal, the example cited by Professor Neubauer.

In the May 1939 census of Jews, available at Mormon Family History Centers, Gutta is listed with additional information such as born in Gochsheim, Bavaria, with the maiden name of Mohr; she had Jewish parents and grandparents, and had no university education. She lived with Hermann Aal and Martha Aal (relationships not given).

The Berlin Gedenkbuch lists both Jutta and Marta [sic], and includes street address in Berlin and dates they were transported to Theresienstadt. Here are the entries:

Aal, Jutta geb. Mohr geb am 16.11.60 in Gochsheim, Bayern; Schoeneberg, Meraner Str.8; 44. Altertransport vom 14.08.42, Theresienstadt; Todesort: Theresienstdt am 01.09.42

Aal, Marta, geb.am 27.01.86 in Nuernberg; Schoeneberg, Meraner Str.8; 26. Transport vom 12.01.43; Auschwitz; Todesort: Auschwitz, verschollen.

The actual transport list is available on film at U.S. National Archives, the Berlin Bundesarchiv and Landesarchiv. It adds no further information except that she was "ohne Beruf" [no profession], which was true of most of the persons in these Alterstransports. Here is the entry:

[#]95 Aal, geb. Mohr Gutta Sara [b.] 16.11.6x [b.] Godesheim (sic) [Beruf] ohne.

While it is not always possible to locate similar

information on all German Jews deported to Theresienstadt, memorial books exist for virtually every major city where Jews resided (exceptions Breslau and Leipzig), or there are other sources of information (e.g. München Stadtarchiv.) Transport lists are now available on film for all areas of Germany in its 1937 boundaries, other than East Prussia and, perhaps, the Pommern area.

Conclusion: keep on looking – it is amazing what information is now available.– PL

Brocke, Michael, ed. *Der alte jüdische Friedhof zu Frankfurt am Main: Unbekannte Denkmäler und Inschriften.* Sigmaringen: Jan Thorbecke, 1996. 460 pages (22 x 28 cm.), linen-bound, 113 b/w photos. DM 48.

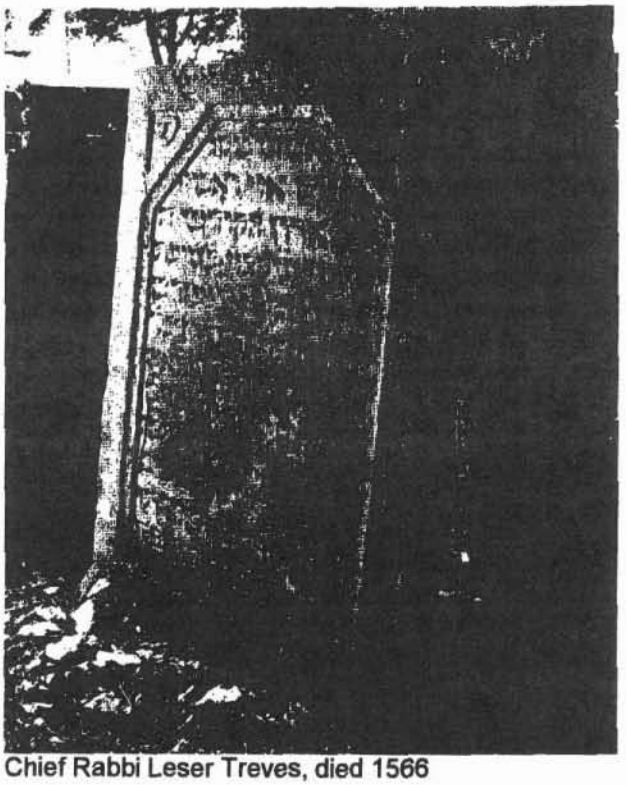
Reviewed by Frank Julius Adler, Leawood, KS
fjadler@juno.com

This handsome volume presents, with beautiful photography and excellent documentation, the inscriptions of 113 "previously unknown" tombstones in one of the oldest Jewish cemeteries in Germany – the one adjoining the former Judengasse of Frankfurt am Main that served this "mother community in Israel" from the mid-thirteenth century until 1828. ("Previously unknown" needs modification; photos of three of these stones were previously published.)

The book is of obvious interest to those who, like this reviewer, have ancestors who resided in Frankfurt while the Judengasse was in existence. But it also merits the attention of anyone who would welcome an opportunity to become more familiar with a variety of tombstone designs for Jewish cemeteries that were in vogue in Germany from the late Middle Ages to the emancipation period.

The research and publication was underwritten by a publicly funded commission, established four decades ago by the city administration of Frankfurt to explore the unique history of its former Jewish community. Reviewed here is the twentieth in a succession of scholarly works that the commission has sponsored to date. The name of the editor, Michael Brocke, may be familiar in the United States in his roles as publisher and editor of *Kalonymos*, quarterly journal of the Salomon Ludwig Steinheim-Institut of Duisburg whose mission is the comprehensive study of German-Jewish history.

Brocke also is a specialist in the field of research and documentation of old Jewish cemeteries in other parts of Germany. Bibliography sections of six successive Leo Baeck Institute Year Books (1994-99) list ten assignments similar to Frankfurt's that have been fulfilled by Brocke and teams assembled by him in Berlin-Spandau, Bielefeld, Bonn-Schwarzrheindorf, Emmerich, Eschweiler, Krefeld, Potsdam, Rietberg-Neuenkirchen, Soest, and Solingen.



Chief Rabbi Leser Treves, died 1566

The individually pictured monuments in the Frankfurt book are among an approximate 2,000 that survived a planned total destruction of the cemetery by the Nazi administration of the city, which wanted more vacant ground on which to dump rubble from World War II air raids. Other priorities halted that scheme, but not before about two-thirds of 6,500 stones that had been in place there before the war were demolished.

Both German and English translations are pro-

vided for all the Hebrew inscriptions. Entries are indexed by name, gender, and date of death. Every entry is cross-referenced to its parallel place in Shlomo Ettlinger's "Ele Toldot" (copy at the New York LBI), and, when pertinent, to Alexander Dietz's 1907 *Stammbuch der Frankfurter Juden*, held by numerous libraries.

Yuta. wife of Rabbi Leser Treves,died 1566

Two further complementary reference sources are supplied for the inscriptions of those who died between 1624 and the closing of the cemetery in 1828: the registers of the burial society, and individual entries in the famous Frankfurt Memorbuch. The burial records are accessible in two parts

□ those for 1624-1680 in the *Gedenkbuch der Frankfurter Juden*, published in 1914 (copies at the LBI and HUC-JIR, Cincinnati)

□ those for 1680-1828 in transcripts on file at the Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem. The Jewish National & University Library, Jerusalem, is custodian of the Frankfurt Memorbuch.

In sum, this finely crafted book has much to recommend it – expertly photographed tombstones with inscriptions that are frequently poetic in form or colorfully expressed in other ways. Supported by the extensive documentation (of particular importance to genealogists), they furnish welcome glimpses into the lives of generations long past.

It would be pleasant to be able to conclude this review with unalloyed praise, which the essence of the book fully deserves. Regrettably, however, a weakness must be dealt with as well.

This reviewer must take exception to the editor's lengthy and relentless assault on the merit of a landmark work that had been issued 95 years earlier by the community's Rabbi Markus Horovitz, *Die Inschriften des alten Friedhofs der israelitischen Gemeinde zu Frankfurt a. M.* (copies at LBI-NY, New York Public Library, and HUC-JIR, Cincinnati). That volume contains 5,938 tombstone inscriptions from this cemetery, along with a lucid account of the historic setting.

Almost every critical count in the indictment can be refuted from prior expert testimony. The weight of the evidence favors Horovitz. Noteworthy, after the persistent faultfinding, are the three paragraphs which suddenly and stoutly uphold the intrinsic worth and importance of Horovitz's work.

Two matching volumes are yet to come. Scheduled to appear next is one to contain the inscriptions of *all* surviving tombstones in the same cemetery (approx. 2,000). The final one will list those in the special section of the newer Rat-Beil-Strasse cemetery that was reserved for members of Frankfurt's separatist Orthodox Israelitische Religionsgesellschaft.

Elizabeth S. Plaut. *The Gumprichs of Muenster/*

Elizabeth S. Plaut. *The Gumprichs of Muenster/ Westphalia: A Tale of Four Continents.* Toronto, Ontario, Abbeyfield Publishers 2000. 250 pp. $29.95.To obtain copies, contact Rabbi Jonathan Plaut plaut@rust.net

Reviewed by Karen S. Franklin

The careful genealogist who has spent a lifetime amassing a family history, documentation and family tree charts often has trouble publishing and making available this material. There is always one more branch to follow up, and one more document to check. And so often these valuable lifetime achievements become unavailable, unappreciated or unused.

This volume, based on years of research, almost did not appear. Elizabeth S. Plaut had prepared it for publication just before she was stricken by several serious strokes which left her unable to see its distribution, nor to realize the satisfaction which comes with the publication which has been taken on by her family.

Mrs. Plaut's first book, *The Guggenheim/ Wormser Family: A Genealogical 300- Year Memoir* (1996, Ktav -- reviewed in *Stammbaum* Issue 12), focused on a family which, for the most part, emigrated from small towns in Germany in the nineteenth Century. The present volume, which features her husband's family, delves more deeply into the twentieth century story of an extraordinarily talented and successful family which, as a result of World War II, was scattered throughout the world She, of course, pays special attention to her husband's most extraordinary story (Rabbi W. Gunther Plaut, a scholar, is author of the Torah Commentary used in hundreds of Reform congregations throughout the world), and the life of her mother-in-law. Selma Plaut, among other accomplishments, received her B.A.degree from the University of Toronto at the age of 100!

Mrs. Plaut combines an ability to interpret and transmit the larger historical details with a colorful personal touch. Here is a sample:

> (Jonas) Plaut was well read, inquisitive of mind, with a splendid sense of humor, a hearty laugh, and the ability to turn a good phrase. He was tenderhearted almost to a fault, a situation which his wife often used to her advantage.(p.83)

Anyone interested in writing a family history for publication, or engaged in recent social history, would benefit from reading this fascinating volume.

Löwenthal, Ernst G. and Oppenheimer, Hans. *PHILO-Atlas: Handbuch für die Jüdische Auswanderung,* 283 pages plus 20 maps. Philo G.m.b.H, Berlin, 1938. Reprint 2000 by Philo Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, Wormser Str. 99, D-55294 Bodenheim b. Mainz, Germany. DM 50. ISBN 3-8257-0086-0.

Reviewed by Claus W. Hirsch

The year 1938, when this little gem, *A Handbook for Jewish Emigration,* was first published, marked a turning point in the history of Germany Jewry. The Nuremberg race laws had been enacted three years earlier. They subjected Jews increasingly to onerous indignities and deprived them of many basic rights. The story of that period, climaxed by the infamous burning of synagogues on Kristallnacht on 9 November 1938, should be well known to readers of this journal. It resulted in the torching of 267 synagogues throughout Germany, the roundup of 25,000 Jewish men, death of nearly 100 Jews at the hands of storm troopers, destruction of more than 7,000 Jewish businesses. As a final insult a fine of 1 billion Reichsmark ($400 million) was imposed on the Jewish community.

When Hitler came to power in 1933, many Jews still had pride in their German citizenship and all that that implied. Only a few – artists, left-leaning citizens – were quick to grasp what was in store for them and opted to emigrate. Germany's Jewish population, a minority, declined from the official count of 564,000 in 1925 to 500,000 by 1933 (some 0.7 percent of the population). By 1938, that minority dropped to 365,000 as Jews sought safe haven in the country then called Palestine, the United States, South America, other parts of Europe and elsewhere. Emigration by Jews from 1933 to the middle of 1938 was estimated at 141,300. That left about 300,000 Jews in Germany by the end of 1938.

In addition, about 165,000 Jews remained in Vienna after the annexation of Austria in March 1938. Some 70 percent of Austria's Jewish population resided in Vienna and they accounted for 12 percent of that city's population in 1925, when their numbers apparently peaked at about 225,000.

To the Jews remaining in Grossdeutschland it was now abundantly clear that Hitler and his henchmen were not a passing craze and that all Jewish good deeds – for example military service to the fatherland during World War I, and community service, including public office – would not exempt them from the horrors of a fascist dictatorship bent on ridding itself of "the Jewish problem."

German Jews frantically looked for other countries which would accept them as immigrants. My own family had secured visas for Bolivia, only to discover that those visas were probably issued illegally by corrupt consular officials eager to earn a little extra income. The port of last resort proved to be Shanghai, a place requiring no entry visa. There my family headed in late 1940 via Poland, Russia and the Trans-Siberian Railroad. Along with 20,000 other refugees, we spent the war years in that Chinese city, obviously not the first choice.

Jews were desperate for knowledge about strange foreign lands which they knew only by name. They sought answers: What were the local customs? Vaccination requirements? Jewish population figures? Weather conditions? Opportunities for work? Names and addresses of local welfare agencies? What was the value of local currencies in relation to the Reichsmark (then worth about 40 U.S. cents) What steamship lines offered passage to their potential refuge? What was the cost of that passage?

Except for the topic of local customs, the *PHILO-Atlas* provided answers to all of these questions – and more. This German-language reprint is divided into four parts.

I- a lengthy introduction by Susanne Urban-Fahr traces the ordeal of the Jewish community in Germany in a sympathetic recap (she correctly refers to Kristallnacht as a "pogrom") of Jews' attempts to deal with rising anti-Semitism. She reviews the role of organizations such as the CV, the Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens [Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith], founded before World War I, in 1893. She traces the history of the Philo-Verlag, publishers of the *Philo-Lexikon.*

Dr. Urban-Fahr is a lecturer in Jewish adult education in Frankfurt/Main, and on the editorial staff of the German-Jewish journal *Tribuene.* Her Ph.D. dissertation covered the old Philo-Verlag.

II - A main section provides detailed data on many of the questions raised above, alphabetically by topic.

III - In tabular form, information on passenger ship lines, currencies, drugs and their uses, country vital data, temperature conversion measures and other topics.

IV - Philo provides 20 color maps.

PHILO-Atlas, according to Urban-Fahr, was the last book issued by a Jewish publishing house before the Nazi regime shut it down in late 1938. As such, it has historic value. More importantly, it was a useful compendium of information to guide the desperate families eager to escape the increasing horrors of Germany in the late 1930s. Its historic value makes it an important acquisition for relevant researchers.

This hard-cover book costs about U.S.$ 21.50; it is also available on some Web sites like the German operation of *Amazon.com.*

Letter from the Editor

Farewell! With regret I have resigned as editor of **Stammbaum**, in part because it has become too demanding, and in part because the time has come for some fresh ideas and techniques.

While I have recovered quite well from my bicycle accident two years ago, the facts are: Because of nerve damage, I will be unable to use my left eye for the rest of my life. And my coordination is impaired, thus reducing me to two-

finger typing, hardly the best qualification for a writer and editor. I feel just fine, and I am available, on request, as a consultant and adviser. The Advisory Committee has known all of this since June. The chair of the committee, Karen Franklin, explains below how things will unfold hereafter.

Old Family Trees. In issue 17, I requested submission of very specific data of family trees published during the past 30 years. There have been exactly two submissions. I thank the authors for what appears below on the last pages of text. I fear that I was a bit too specific, possibly too demanding in specifying content and format; this discouraged others from submitting their data. In any event, the family histories are or should be at LBI in New York as part of its vast and growing collection.

At this point I can't resist inserting an entry from the 1935 publication, *Philo Lexikon, Handbuch des juedischen Wissens:*

Familienforschung: Bis vor wenigen Jahrzehnten unbekannt... Erst bei einsetzendem Verfall d. j. Familienlebens erwuchs moderne F. durch Studium der geschichtlichen, kulturellen, hygienischen und eugenischen Bedeutung d. j. Familie....

Genealogy: Unknown until a few decades ago.... Only with the beginning decline of Jewish family life did genealogy grow through study of the historical, cultural, sanitary and eugenic significance of the Jewish family....

Leo Baeck Institute. As promised rather prominently in Issue 17, and repeated on p.1 above, LBI has in fact moved to 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011-6301. Phone 212-744- 6400 and Fax 212-988-1305 remain unchanged; so does e-mail: lbi1@lbi.org

In Memoriam: Sybil H[alpern] Milton. Dr. Milton died on 16 October 2000 at age 59, at the clinical center of the National Cancer Institute. She served as Director of Archives at LBI 1974-84, and more recently as vice-president of the independent Bergier

Genealogy Institute. The recently established Center for Jewish History, where the Leo Baeck Institute moved last summer, has created a Genealogy Institute to guide, advise and direct family researchers. Its intended function is educational and instructional. Archival and research funtions remain with the Center partners, in the case of German-speaking Jewry, with the Leo Baeck Institute.

The Genealogy Institute has received and now owns a hard copy of the inventory of Jewish records microfilmed by the Mormons, which was given to the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies at the Salt Lake City conference last summer.

Dr. Rachel Fisher is director of the Genealogy Institute, assisted by many volunteers.

Contact Information: Center for Jewish History Genealogy Institute, 15 West 16th Street, New York, NY 10011.☎212-294-8324 E-mail: gi@cjh.org

German Resource. *Library Resources for German-Jewish Genealogy* by Angelika G. Ellmann-Krueger with Edward David Luft. 88 pp. Softcover. $20.

This is not a book review. I haven't even seen the book, but I am familiar with the authors, and with excerpts which appeared earlier, so I feel comfortable in calling your attention to this relevant paperback from *Avotaynu* which is not only a monthly magazine but also a book publisher. www.avotayny.com/catalog.htm
The book is in English, but deals only with resources in the German Federal Republic.

Frankfurt Data Bank. The city of Frankfurt/M is compiling a data bank of short biographies of Jewish victims of the Nazi period in Frankfurt, that is those who were persecuted there, born there, lived there, or were deported from there. *Contact:* Juedisches Museum, Untermainkai 14/15, D60311 Frankfurt am Main.

Auschwitz Synagogue. In September 2000 the former synagogue in the Polish town of Oswiecim was reopened, located about 3 km from the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum. Among its facilities will be a genealogy center. Focus is on the pre-war Jewish population of about 12,000, not the concentration camp.

So-called German Minority Census. Thanks to Yvonne Adler, Los Angeles, CA,

shanghai1@jps.net, here is a look, with her translation of the questionnaire:

The data base for the Minority Census of 1938, carried out on 17 May 1939, (*Reichssippenamt Volkszaehlung vom 17.05, 1938, durchgefuehrt 1939)* is available at the Mormon Family History Centers (Church of Latter Day Saints). The document begins with a uniform description of what is to follow, then a two-page questionnaire.

1. First Name (*Vorname*), Family Name *(Familienname)*, Birth day, month and year (*Geburstag, Monat, Jahr)*, Place of Birth and County (*Geburtsort und Kreis)*.
Is one of the four grandparents a full Jew according to the Racial Laws (*War oder ist ein der vier Grosselternteile der Rasse nach Volljude? Ja oder Nein.)*
Paternal Side *(Vaeterlicherseits*), Maternal Side *(Muetterlicherseits*),
Educational Level: Have you finished higher education/ university? (*Haben Sie ein Hochschul oder Fachschulstudium abgeschnitten? Ja oder Nein?) oder vor welchem Pruefungsamt haben Sie Staats oder Abschlusspruefungen abgelegt? Ja oder Nein).*
If "yes," in which higher institution/university, in which civil examination bureau did you take the state or school exam?
(*Wenn ja, an welcher Hoch oder Fachschule oder vor welchem Pruefungsamt haben Sie Staats oder Abschlusspruefungen abgelegt?)*

2. Other members of the household who are not family (*Voruebergehende Mitglieder der Haushaltung.*)

Vienna Museum. On the site of a thirteenth century synagogue, Judenplatz 8, A-1010 Vienna, a Jewish Museum and Memorial was inaugurated in October 2000. The memorial lists the places where the Nazi regime executed Jews. The museum is devoted, through a multimedia format, to the medieval history of Jews in Vienna around 1400. Also included is documentation of the 65,000 Austrian victims of the Shoah. <www.jmw.at> –ga

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Preview:
Jewish Population of Vienna 1784-1894 Biographical Database on CD-Rom

By Tina Walzer[42]

An international team of researchers and historians is now finishing research on the social history of the Jews in Vienna between 1784 and 1874. During five years of intensive work, biographical data of more than 10,000 individuals were put into computer databases. This compilation is now to be released on CD-ROM. It will provide access to data practically inaccessible to most researchers. The CD-ROM will contain the output of three different studies carried out in cooperation between Austria and Israel.

Starting point for all of them was the huge Waehring Jewish Cemetery in Vienna, official burial place for Vienna Jews between 1784 and 1874. The *Graeberbuch,* book of the deceased, was a source, as was the book of inscriptions: birth, marriage and death records of the Vienna Jewish Congregation, health and death records of the civil administration, and the lists of households of "tolerated" Jews of the royal administration. Both books were compiled after the closure of the cemetery.

While the social project under direction of the author (at the Institute for the History of Jews in Austria) focused on migration, settlement and occupation structure, and the causes of death of all those buried there, Professor Shlomo Spitzer from Bar Ilan University (Ramat Gan) directed the transcription, translation, comment and interpretation of the tombstone inscriptions.

Wolfgang Gasser, collaborator of the social project, listed all members of the registered, "tolerated" Jewish households between 1784 and 1848 and drew a map of the cemetery's older part. Additionally, Wolf-Erich Eckstein, a passionate Jewish genealogist, is providing digitalized photographs of the most precious and interesting tombstones, thus completing the documentation of this outstanding cemetery.

[42] Director of this project at the Institute for the History of Jews in Austria, Lammgasse 12/12 A-1080 Vienna, Austria walzer@nextra.at

The CD-ROM combines data on all aspects of Jewish life at that time. It shows surname and name in German and in its Hebrew version, birth date and place of origin (not always identical with birth place, depending on the source), marital status, family and working relations, occupation, address, date and place and cause of death, (often Jewish hospitals or institutions), burial place with grave number, text of the tombstone engraving, pictures of tombstones, portraits, coats of arms, a map of the cemetery. Places of origin, addresses, professions and clinical pictures of causes of death have been analyzed and structured in order to make contemporary terms comprehensible. Introductions to and comments on the origin, the reliability and the use of all these data complete this prime tool for Jewish genealogy and social sciences.

New Editors of Stammbaum

It is with enormous gratitude that we thank and acknowledge Dr.George Arnstein and his years of service to Stammbaum. Working tirelessly on the many facets of editing and production, George continued loyally through difficult personal times. We have all benefitted from his devotion and expertise, though this is rarely communicated effectively. The editor usually gets little feedback after the issues are published (unless, of course, a mistake is discovered!) Our heartfelt thanks!

The Advisory Board is delighted to announce that two new co-editors have been selected and graciously agreed to serve. We are confident that Dr. Anne Feder Lee and Carol Davidson Baird will continue to edit Stammbaum with care and discretion.

Anne is a freelance author of legal and political issues and has taught political science at universities in Ohio and Hawaii. Her publications include a book on the Hawaii State Constitution as well as articles in Law Reviews, professional journals, and edited volumes. She is the founder and past president of the JGS of Hawaii and is now serving a second term as a board member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies[43].

Carol is the only child of German survivors of the Holocaust, is past president of the San Diego Jewish Genealogical Society as the past and present editor of the SDJGS's newsletter *Discovery*.

She is currently president of the North San Diego County Genealogical Society. She is a regular columnist for *Family Tree*, and writes for many other genealogy journals and newsletters. Carol has travelled and done research extensively in Germany and Poland.

I, personally, would like to recognize the continuing contributions of the Advisory Committee: Bill Firestone, Claus Hirsch, Dr. Hans Hirsch, Peter Landé and Dr. Frank Mecklenburg. The committee communicates regularly to develop policy, provide and solicit articles, and help in proofreading, mailing and subscription management.

--Karen S. Franklin
Chair, Stammbaum Advisory Committee

On the next page are the two family tree summaries, submitted in response to the invitation in Issue 17.

Where to Submit Articles for Stammbaum
We welcome articles and news items for upcoming issues of Stammbaum. We prefer MS Word. Illustrations (e.g. maps, photos) should be suitable for reproduction (if possible, scanned and sent on a diskette or by e-mail, depending on size). The deadline for receiving submissions for the issue to be mailed in the summer of 2001 is April 10. Please send all submissions to: Carol Baird, 255 South Rios Ave., Solana Beach, CA 92075-1903;
E-mail: sbaird@weber.ucsd.edu
and
Anne Feder Lee, 7207 Kuahono St., Honolulu, HI 96825-2703 E-mail:
AnneLee1@compuserve.com (Please note the #1 after AnneLee)

[43] [And Karen Franklin is past president. – ga]

History of a Family Dispersed by Marion Mayer, MM Press [self-published, out of print] Chicago, 1995. xvi+298 pp.$45. SBN: 0-9644869-0-3.

Key Names and Locations (There is no name index)
Bentheim, Bickenbach, Darmstadt-Dieburg, Hesse;
Steiermann (Steuermann), Biblis, Darmstadt-Dieburg, Hesse;
Frohmann, Reinheim, Darmstadt-Dieburg, Hesse;
Metzger, Mainz-Weisenau, Rheinland-Pfalz ;
Feitler, Seeheim-Jugenheim, Darmstadt-Dieburg, Hesse;
Sussmann, Alsbach, Darmstadt-Dieburg, Hesse.

Distribution: Most living members of the family, plus libraries and depositories:
NYPL Jewish Division; LBI NYC; World Jewish Genealogy Org. Brooklyn; Am. Jewish Historical Soc. Waltham, MA; Canadian Jewish Congress, Montreal; Spertus Institute of Jewish Studies, Chicago, IL;Cong. Rodfei Zedek, Chicago; Newberry Libr., Chicago; Holocaust Memorial Foundation of IL, Skokie; Am. Jewish Archives, Cincinnati, OH; SF Holocaust Libr., San Francisco, CA; Alliance Israelite Universelle, Paris; Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris; Centre de Genealogie Juive, Paris; Associacao Religiosa Israelita de Rio De Janeiro;Yad Vashem Libr. Jerusalem; Hessisches Staatsarchiv,Darmstadt, Germ.; Kommission fuer die Geschichte der Juden in Hessen, Wiesbaden, Germ.any.

Submitted by Hanna K. Grossman hannakg@earthlink.net

Some Jewish Families of Hesse and Galicia
Nathan M. Reiss, 308 Wayne Street, Highland Park, NJ 08904-2718.
Pvtly publ. 1980. 229 pp. ($40, incl. shipping) Out of print.

Key names and locations:
* **Reiss**, Ulrichstein, Herbstein, and Bobenhausen II, Hesse.
* **Baum**, Lichenroth and Fulda, Hesse.
* **Edelmuth**, Beuern, Reiskirchen, and Grossen Buseck, Hesse.
* **Lilienstein**, Gossfelden bei Marburg, Hesse.
* **Meyerfeld**, Beuern and Grossen Buseck, Hesse.
* **May**, Rossdorf and Ober-Ramstadt, Hesse.
* **Lippmann**, Rossdorf, Fűrth, and Bauschheim, Hesse.
* **Goldblum**, Olkusz, Russo-Poland and Oświęcim (Auschwitz), Austro-Poland.
* **Krieger**, Oświęcim (Auschwitz), Ośiek, and Kęty, Austro-Poland.
* **Freylich**, Olkusz, Russo-Poland.

Name Index. More than 1600 names. Place Index. More than 300 locations around the world.

Distribution was to many members of the family, plus: LBI NYC, YIVO NYC, Libr. of Congress, Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People, Jerusalem, Deutsche Bibliothek, Frankfurt, Hessisches Staatsarchiv, Marburg, NY Genealogical and Biographical Society, NYC Public Library, Hebrew Union College, Cincinnati and Los Angeles, Jewish Theological Seminary NYC, NY State Library, Albany, Allen County Public Library, Ft. Wayne, IN.